NIC's Model Approach to System Assessment and Policy Development

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Development of the Approach

- Over 25 years of work in nearly all states between NIC and the Center for Effective Public Policy, among others, including:
  - The National Jail and Prison Overcrowding Project
  - The National Intermediate Sanctions Project
  - The System Assessment Project
  - …among other related initiatives…

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Four Step Process

1. Establish a multi-disciplinary collaborative approach
2. Gather and analyze information that will lead to a data-informed analysis process
3. Use a strategic approach to planning and decisionmaking that guides action planning

   Embrace the principles of effective interventions and the use of evidence based practices as the basis of these change strategies
4. Monitor and evaluate the implementation of change strategies to ensure the desired outcomes are achieved

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Establish a Multi-Disciplinary Collaborative Approach

- Why a collaborative approach?
  - No single entity is "in charge" of the criminal justice system
  - Rarely are "system" problems the result of the decisions or actions of one individual or agency
  - Fragmentation, lack of coordination, and sometimes opposing goals can result in unintended consequences
  - Therefore:
    - System problems require system solutions
    - System solutions require us to work together in a coordinated fashion to create a true system from the separate and independent entities that comprise the criminal justice process

So.. how do we do that?

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Gather and Analyze Information that will Lead to a Data-Informed Analysis Process

- Four key types of data and information that are essential to system assessment and thoughtful policy development

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#1: Information About the Offender Population

- What do the offenders coming in to our system "look" like?
- How many of them are there?
- Why are they coming into the system?
- How long are they in the system?
- What are we doing with them now?
- What happens as a result?

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#2 Information about the Resources we have to Reduce Recidivism

- What services are available to enable us to effectively manage the offender population?
- To what extent do these services meet the criteria of "evidence based practices and effective interventions"?
- Are we applying these resources to the "right" offenders?
- Does our demand for service meet our service capacity?

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#3 Information about the Way the System Operates

- Development of a "system map" that:
  - Visually depicts the flow of offenders through the system and identifies:
    - Each process step
    - Key decision points
    - Key decision makers
- The system map serves to:
  - Assure that all team members have a shared understanding of the current system
  - Identify inefficiencies, duplication, or gaps
  - Inform the design of change strategies

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#4 Information about the Policies and Practices that Comprise our Agency Activities

- Are our current practices guided by clearly articulated policy?
- Where policy is absent, what is driving practice?
- Are our policies and practices producing the outcomes we want?
- To what extent do our policies and practices reflect the current state of knowledge with respect to the principles of effective interventions and evidence based practices?

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Use a Strategic Approach to Planning and Decisionmaking that Guides Action Planning

- On the basis of a clear understanding of current practice (the offender population, a map of criminal justice system, the resources available to effectively intervene with offenders, and the policies and practices that guide our offender management work), identify the strengths of the current system and the targets of change.
- Prioritize the most significant change opportunities.
- Working collaboratively, plan and implement strategies to address the most significant gaps in the current system.

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Monitor and Evaluate the Implementation of Change Strategies to Ensure the Desired Outcomes are Achieved

- Design methods to monitor the implementation of these change strategies to assure that they are carried out as planned.
- Design evaluation methods to determine whether the change strategies produced the desired effect.
- Make mid-course corrections as needed.

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For what Purposes has this Approach been Used Elsewhere? *Some examples:*

- To reduce overcrowding (jail and prison).
- To manage specific types of offenders (sex offenders, mentally ill offenders, juveniles).
- To create a more efficient system (expedited case management).
- To create a more community centered system (enhanced involvement of victims and community members).
- To produce better outcomes [reduced recidivism] with offenders (through more effective community supervision, enhanced release decisionmaking processes, more targeted use of intervention resources).

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Evidence-Based Practices and the Principles of Effective Interventions: A *Very Quick* Summary

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Public Safety is the Goal

- One of the primary objectives of correctional organizations is to enhance public safety.
- How do we best accomplish this objective?

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What is Evidence Based Practice?

- The objective, balanced, and responsible use of current research and the best available data to guide policy and practice decisions, such that outcomes for consumers are improved.
  - In our case, consumers include offenders, victims, communities, and other key stakeholders

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Put Simply:

Evidence from relevant literature should support our policy and practice decisions.

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Three decades ago…

- The evidence base in criminal and juvenile justice seemed bleak.
  - "With few and isolated exceptions, the rehabilitative efforts that have been reported so far have had no appreciable effect on recidivism."

(Martinson, 1974, p. 25)

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Today…

- There is a growing evidence base that suggests that:
  - Some interventions and strategies do not lead to the desired outcomes,
  - But some interventions and strategies do!

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For which interventions and strategies is the evidence less than favorable?

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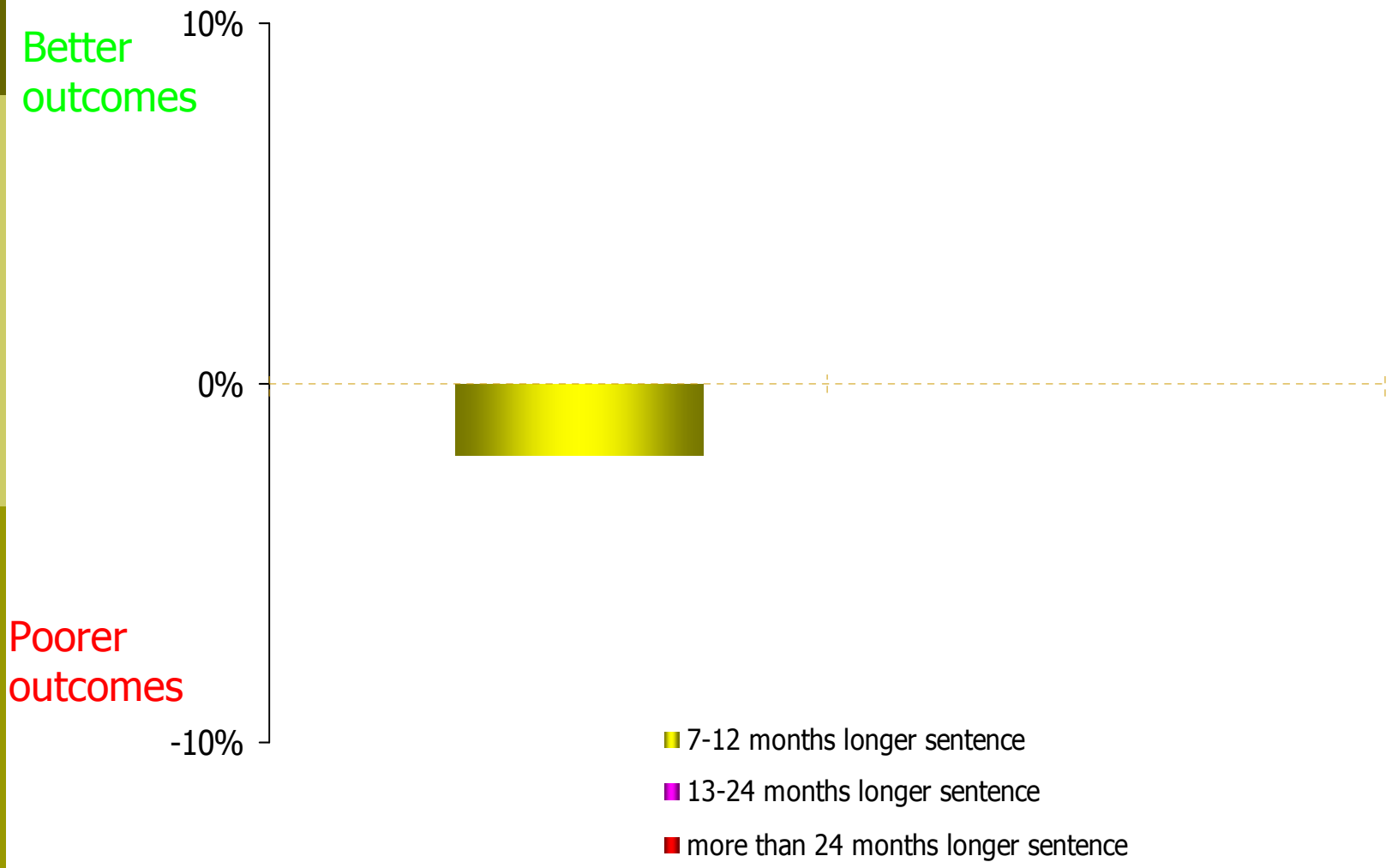
Impact of Sentence Length on Recidivism

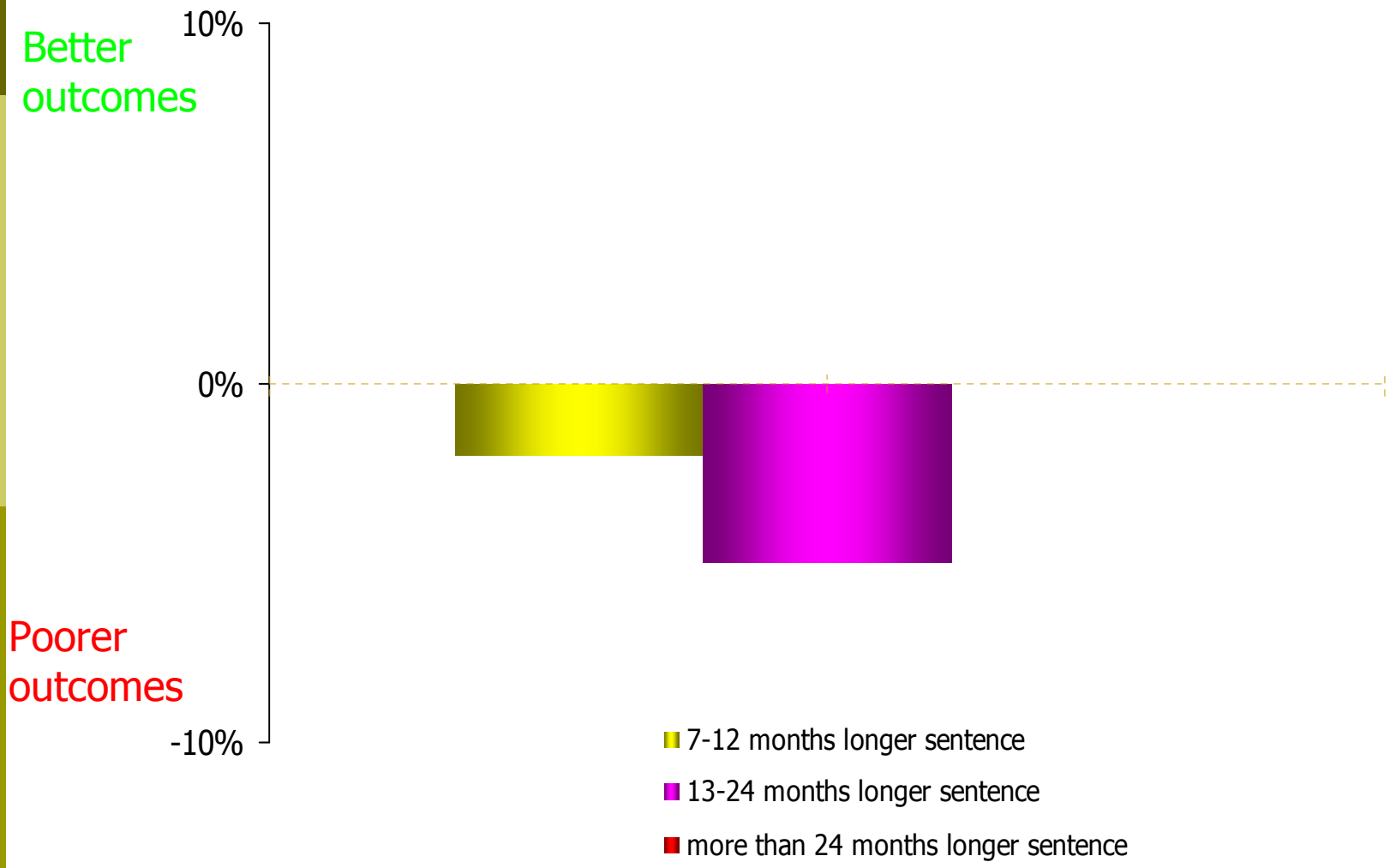
(Smith, Goggin, & Gendreau, 2002)

Impact of Sentence Length on Recidivism



(Smith, Goggin, & Gendreau, 2002)

Impact of Sentence Length on Recidivism



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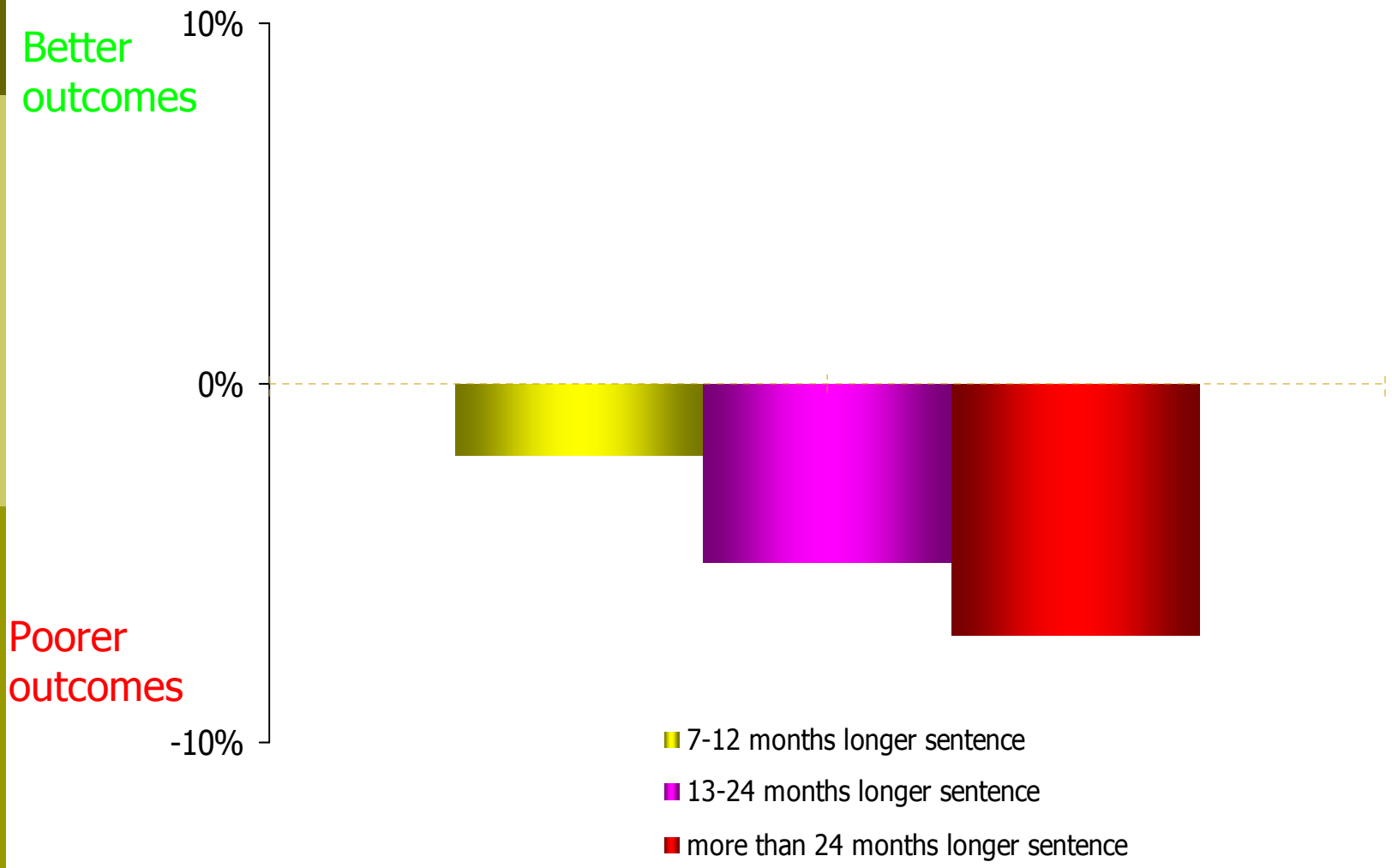
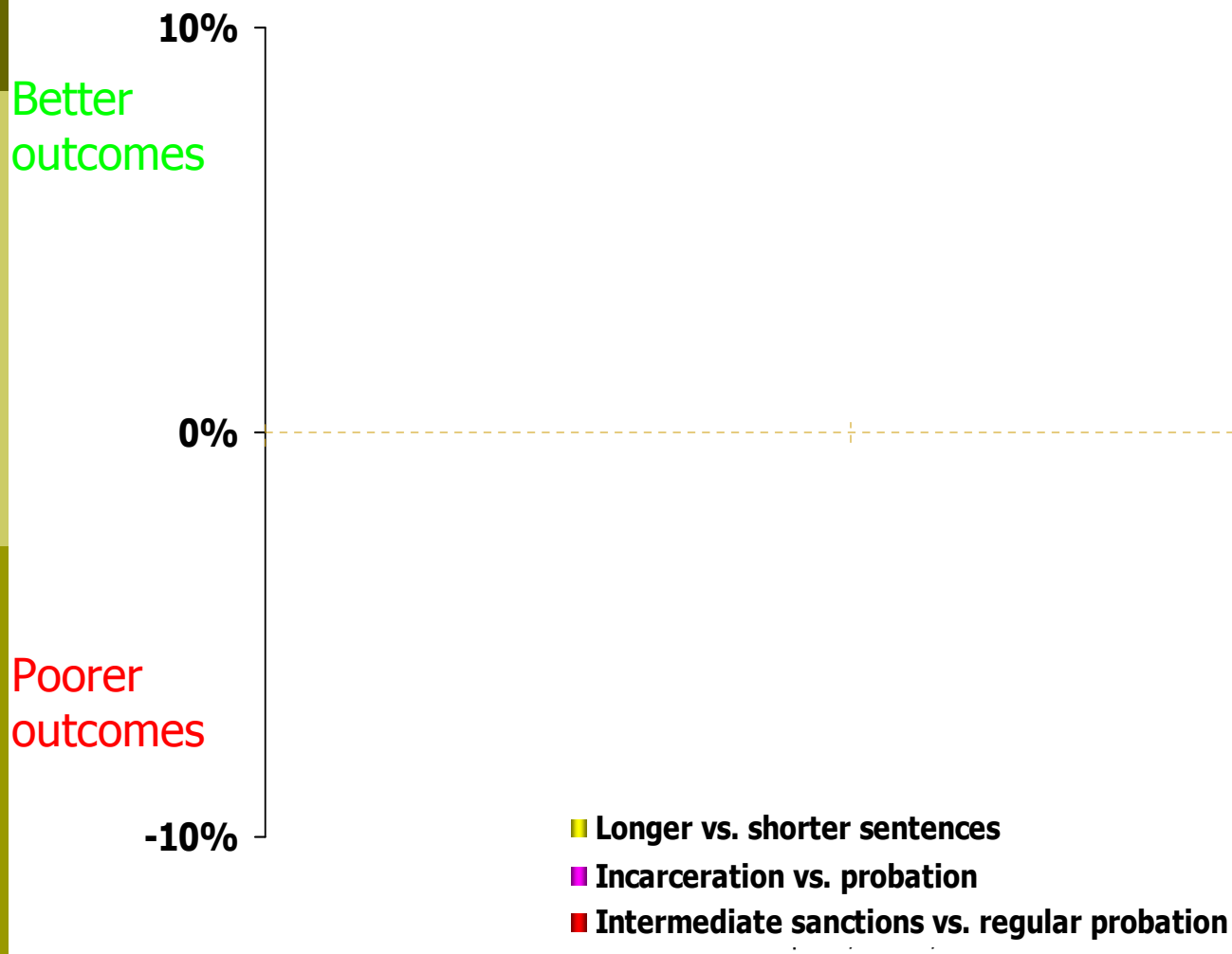
Impact of Sentence Length on Recidivism



(Smith, Goggin, & Gendreau, 2002)

Impact of Punishment-Driven Strategies on Recidivism: Adults



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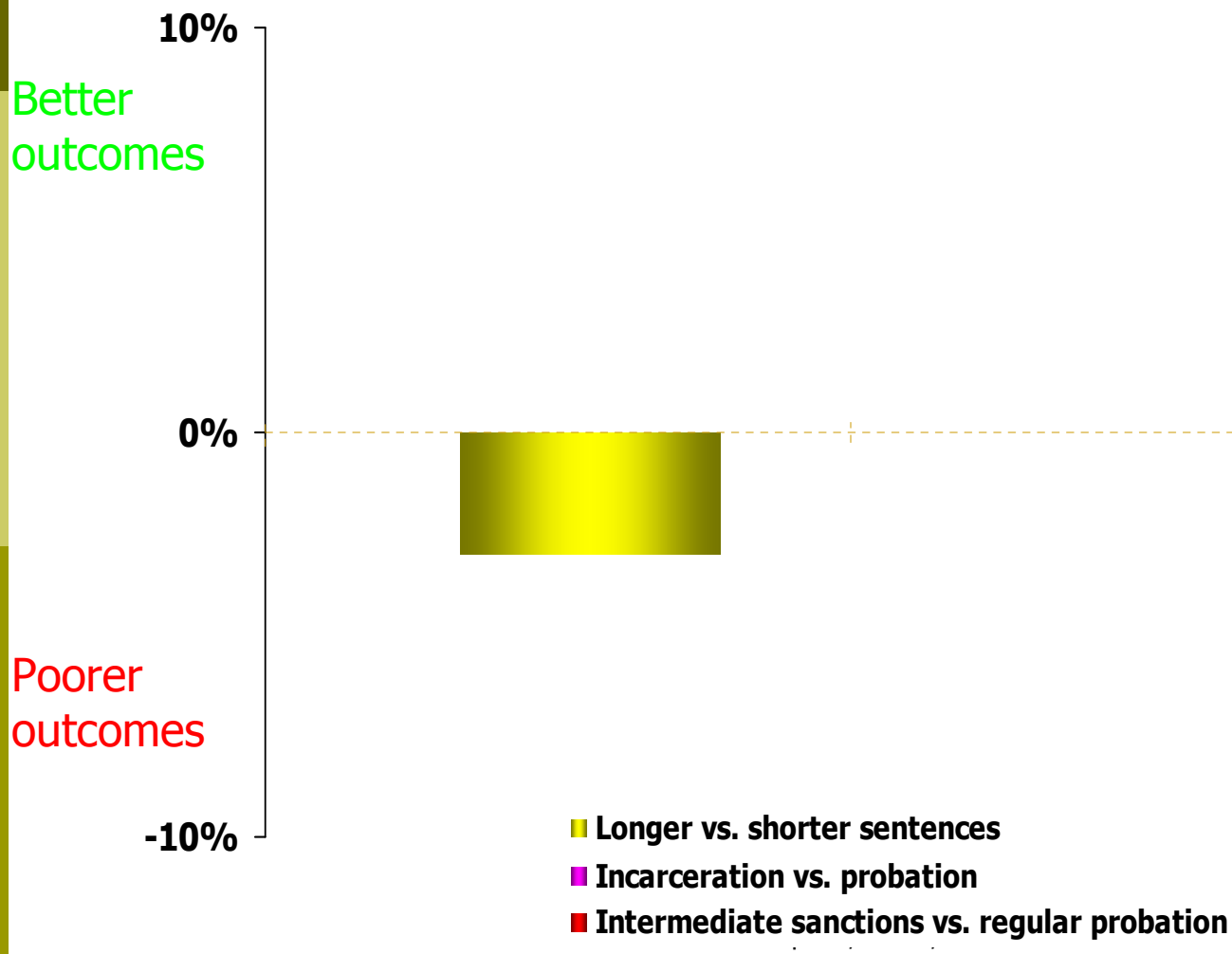

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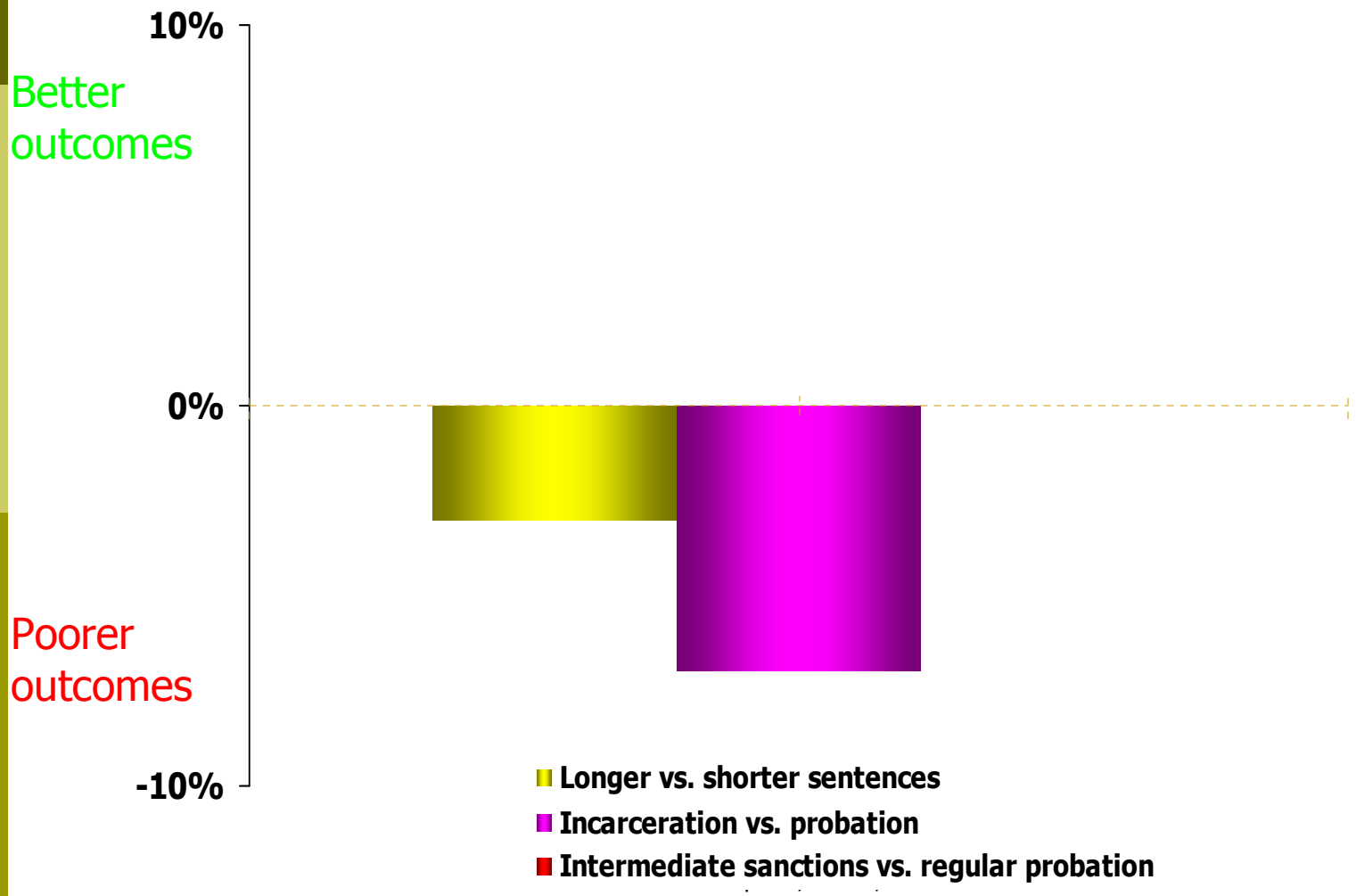

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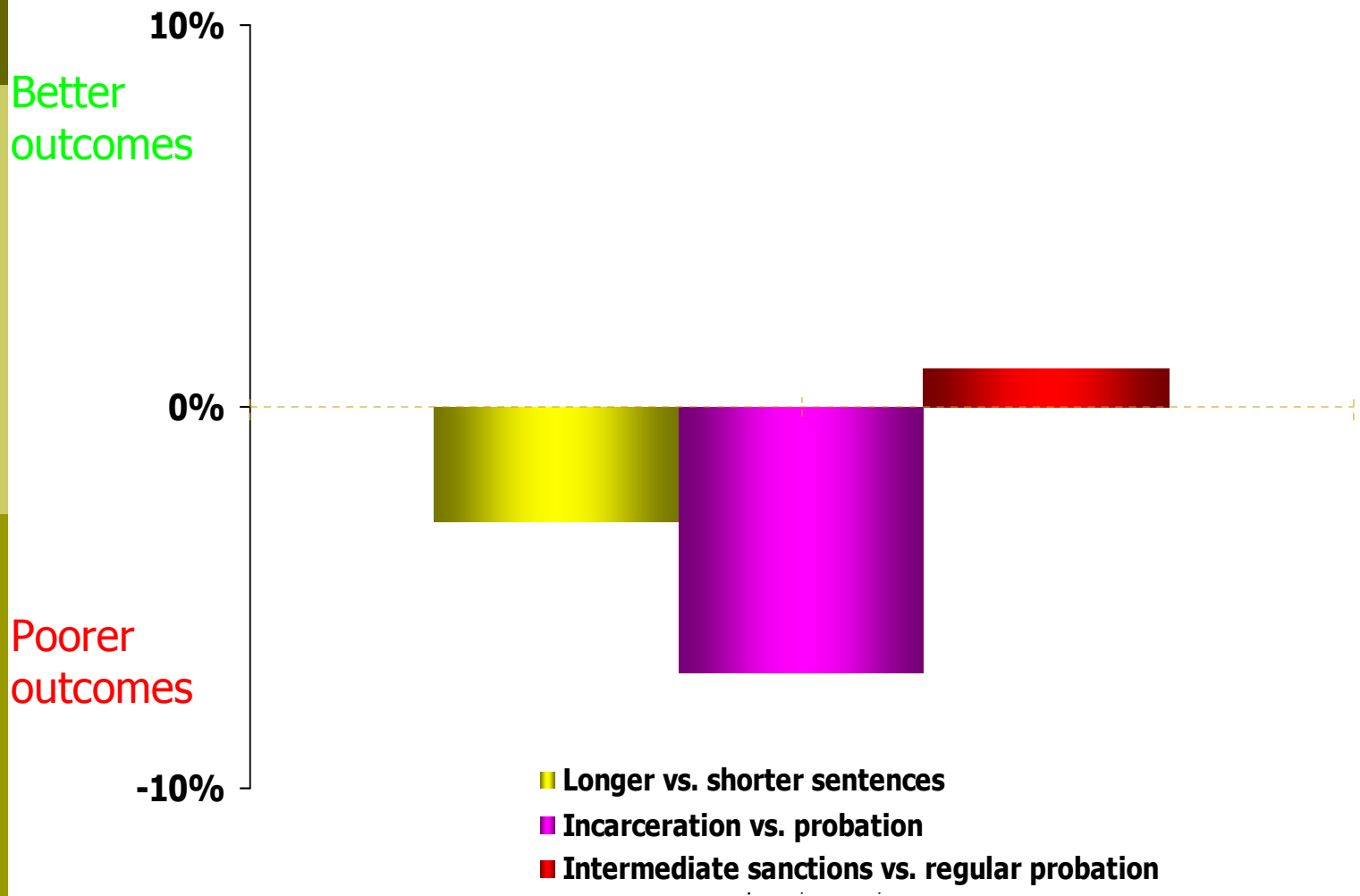

(Smith, Goggin, & Gendreau, 2002)

Impact of Punishment-Driven Strategies on Recidivism: Juveniles

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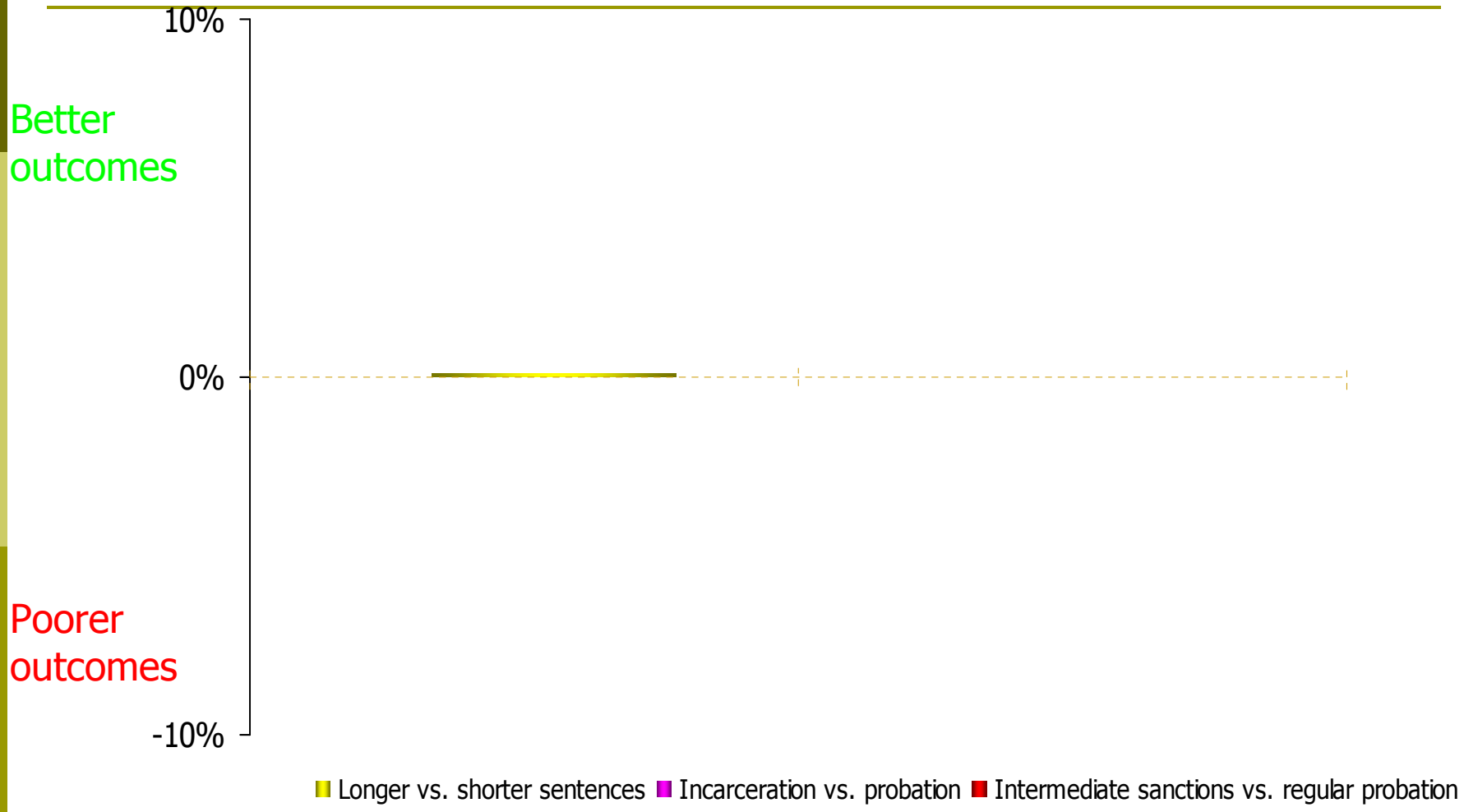
Impact of Punishment-Driven Strategies on Recidivism: Juveniles



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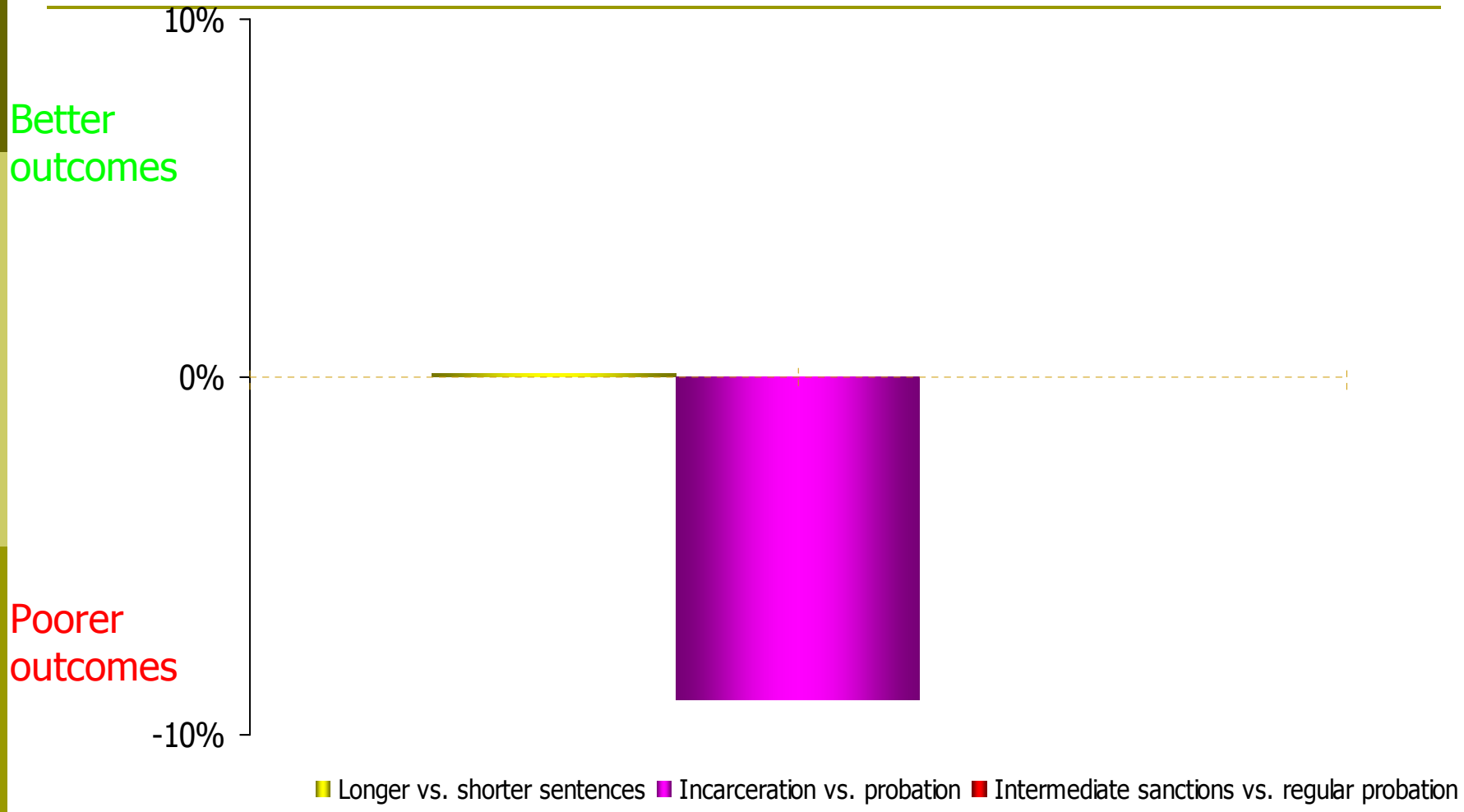

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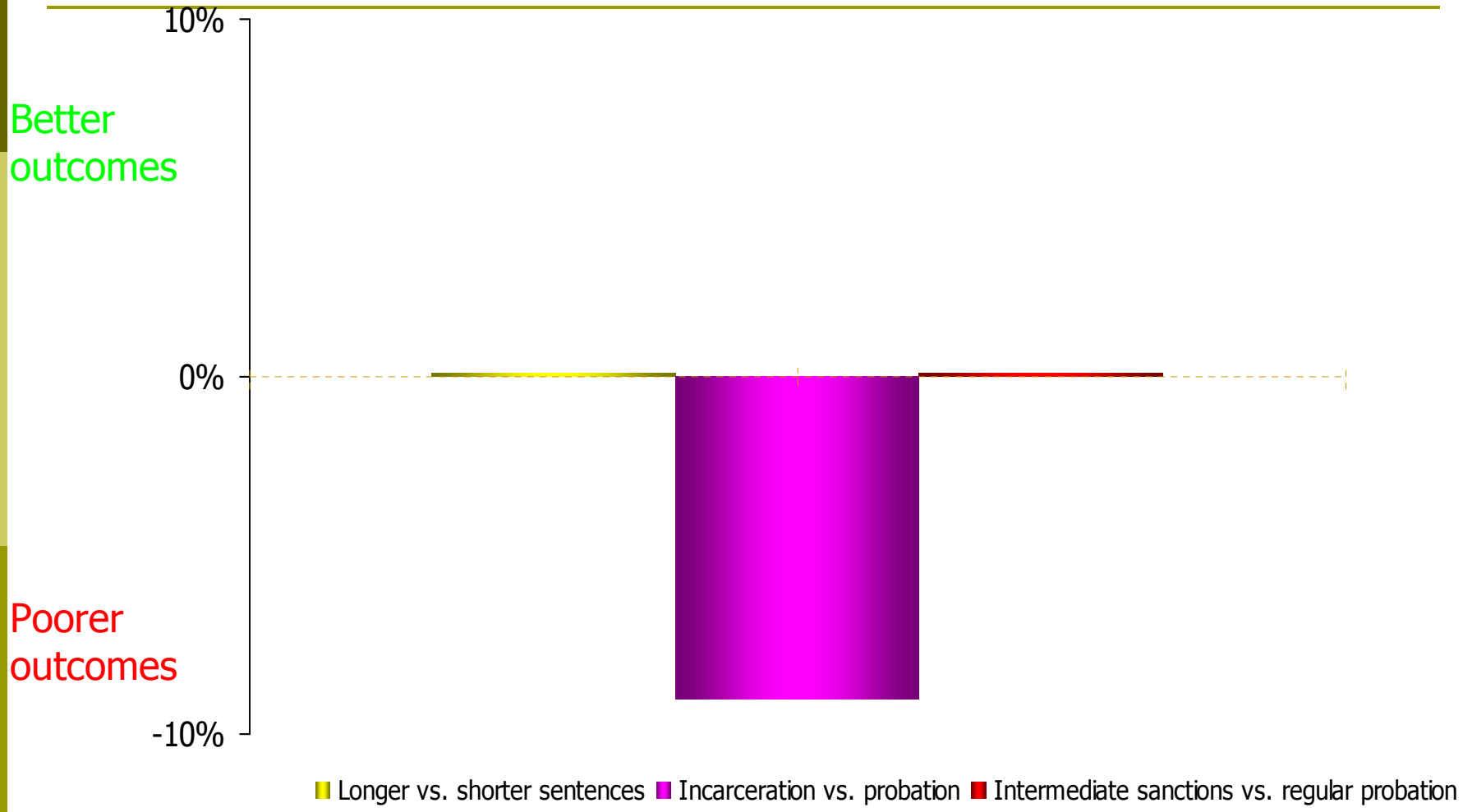

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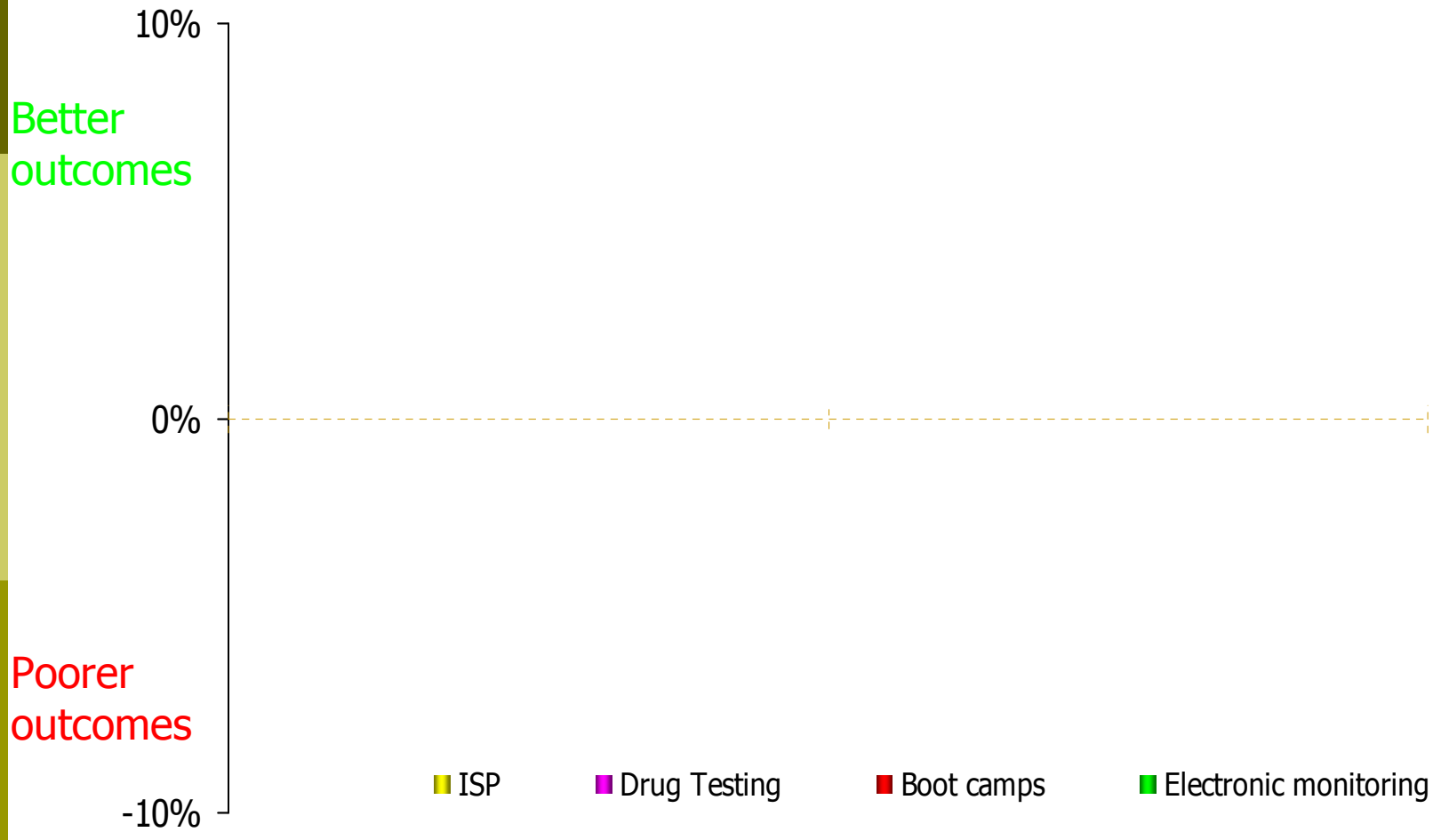
Impact of Intermediate Sanctions on Recidivism: Adults



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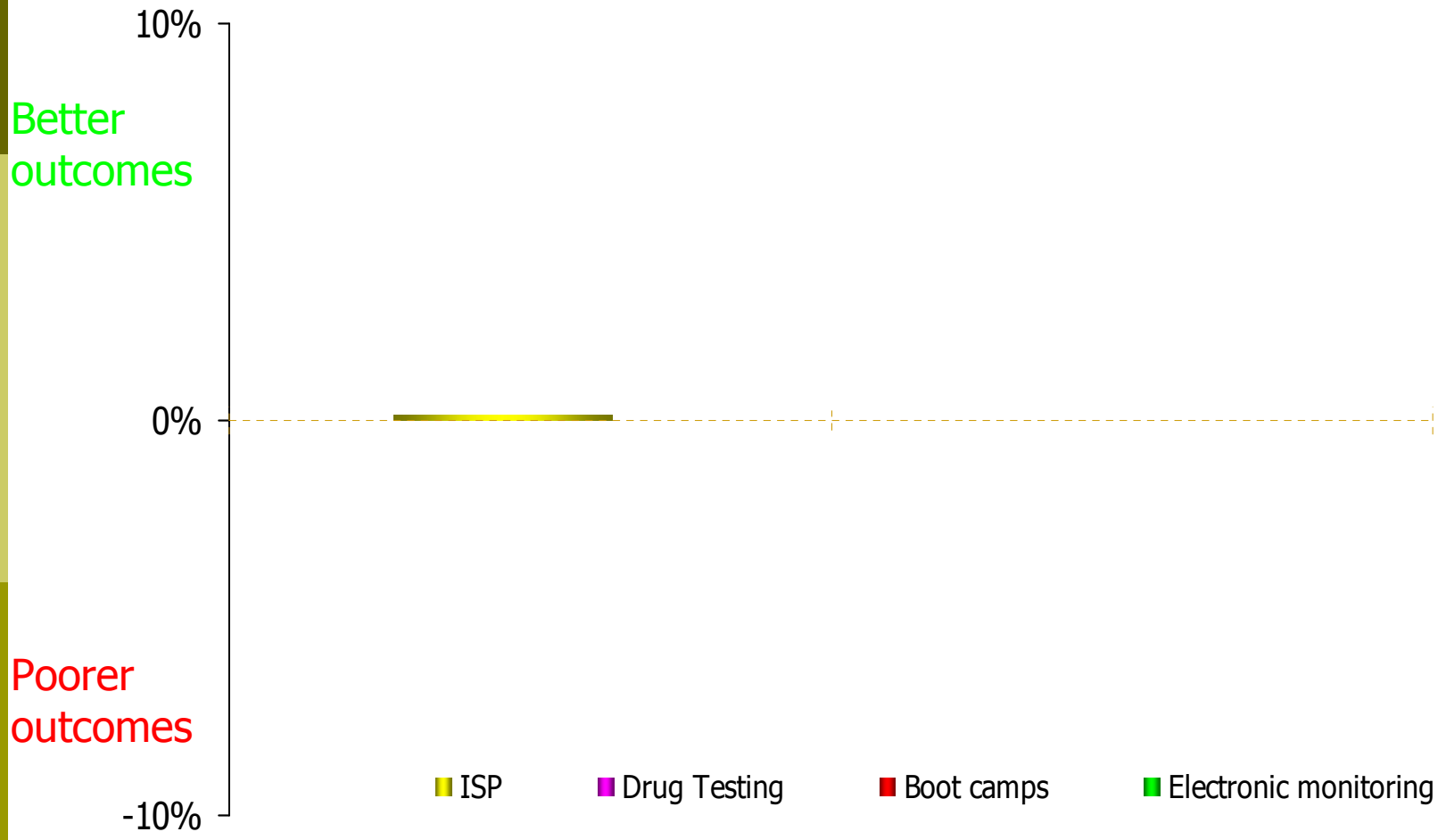

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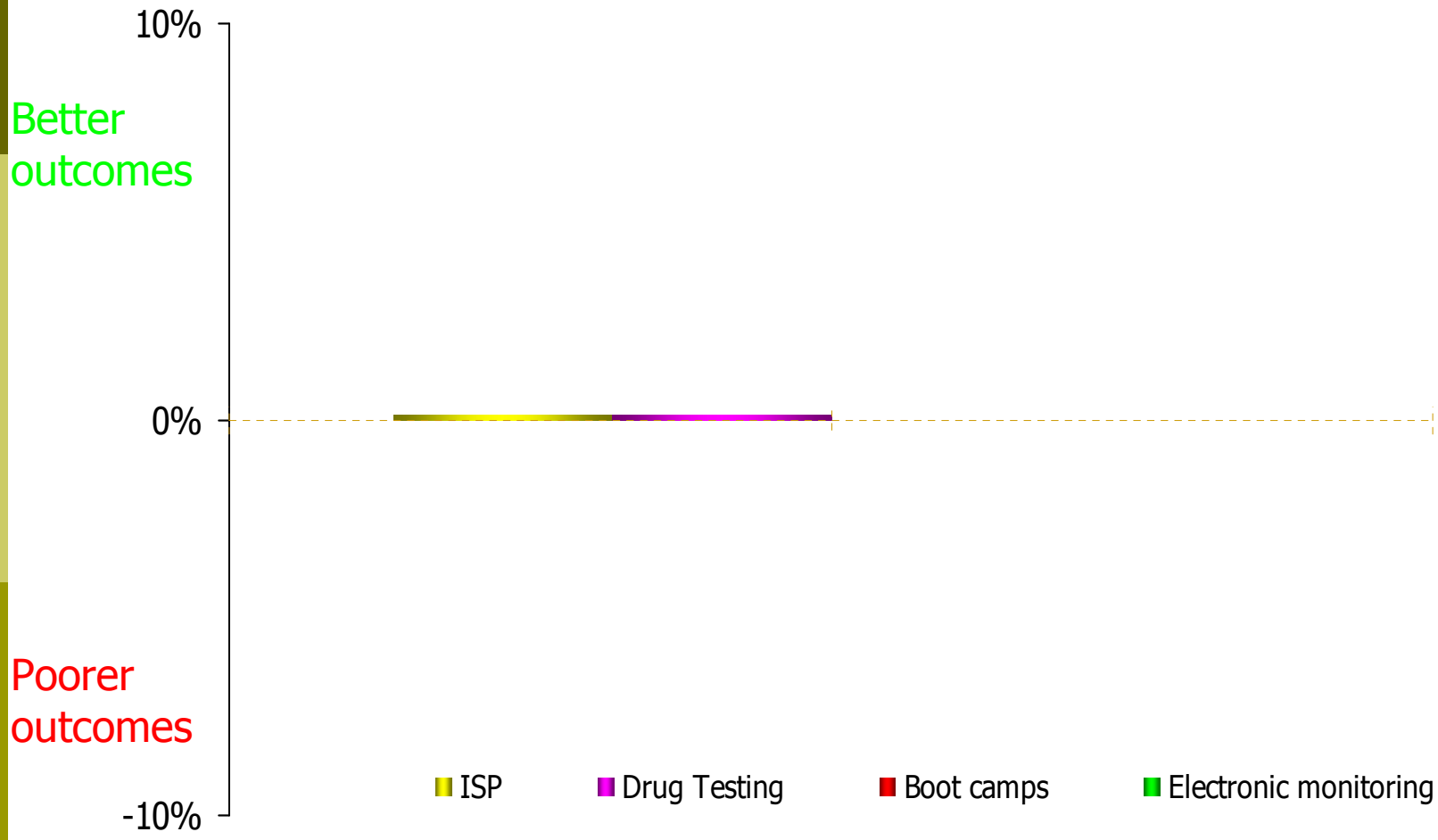

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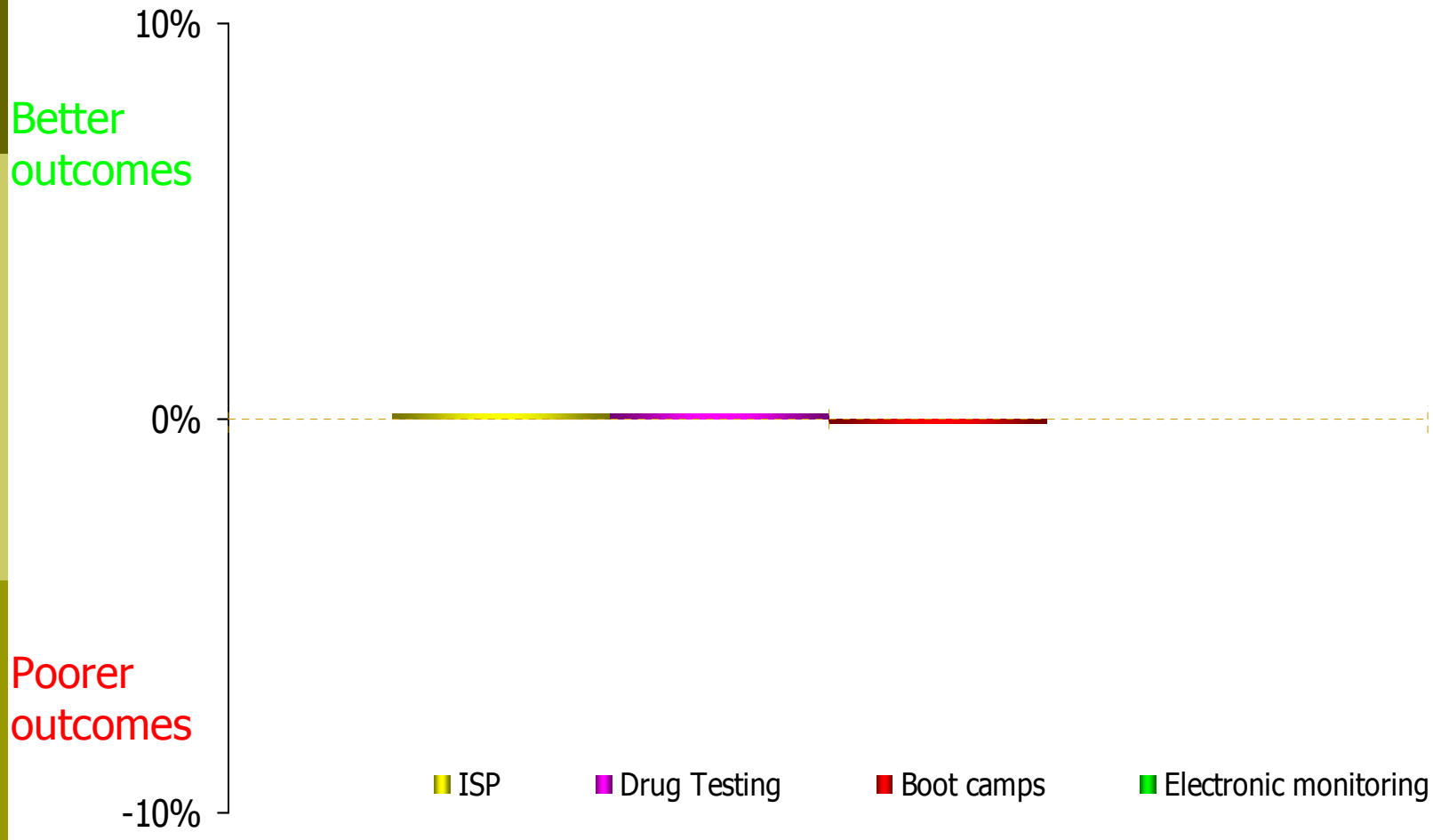

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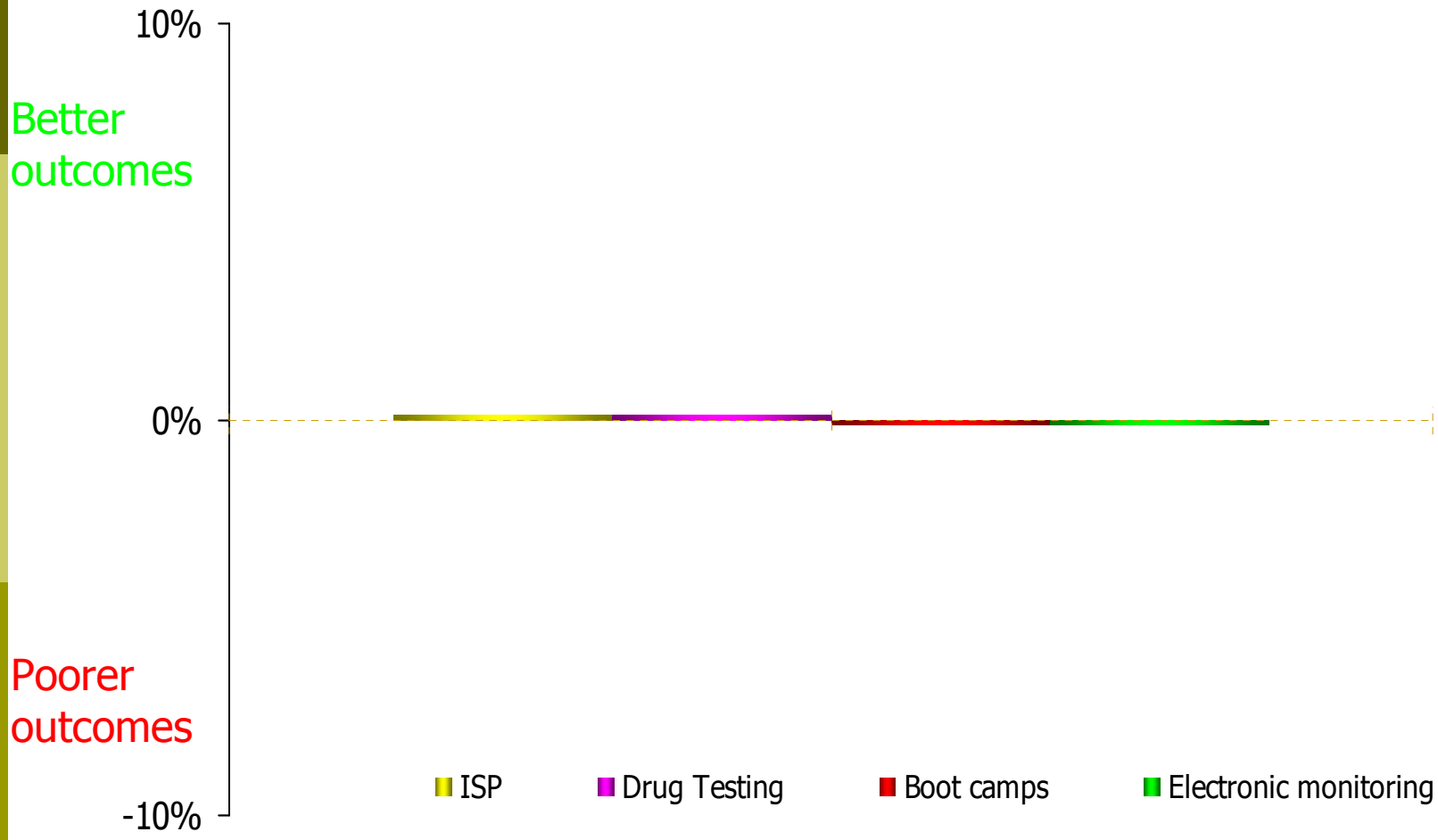

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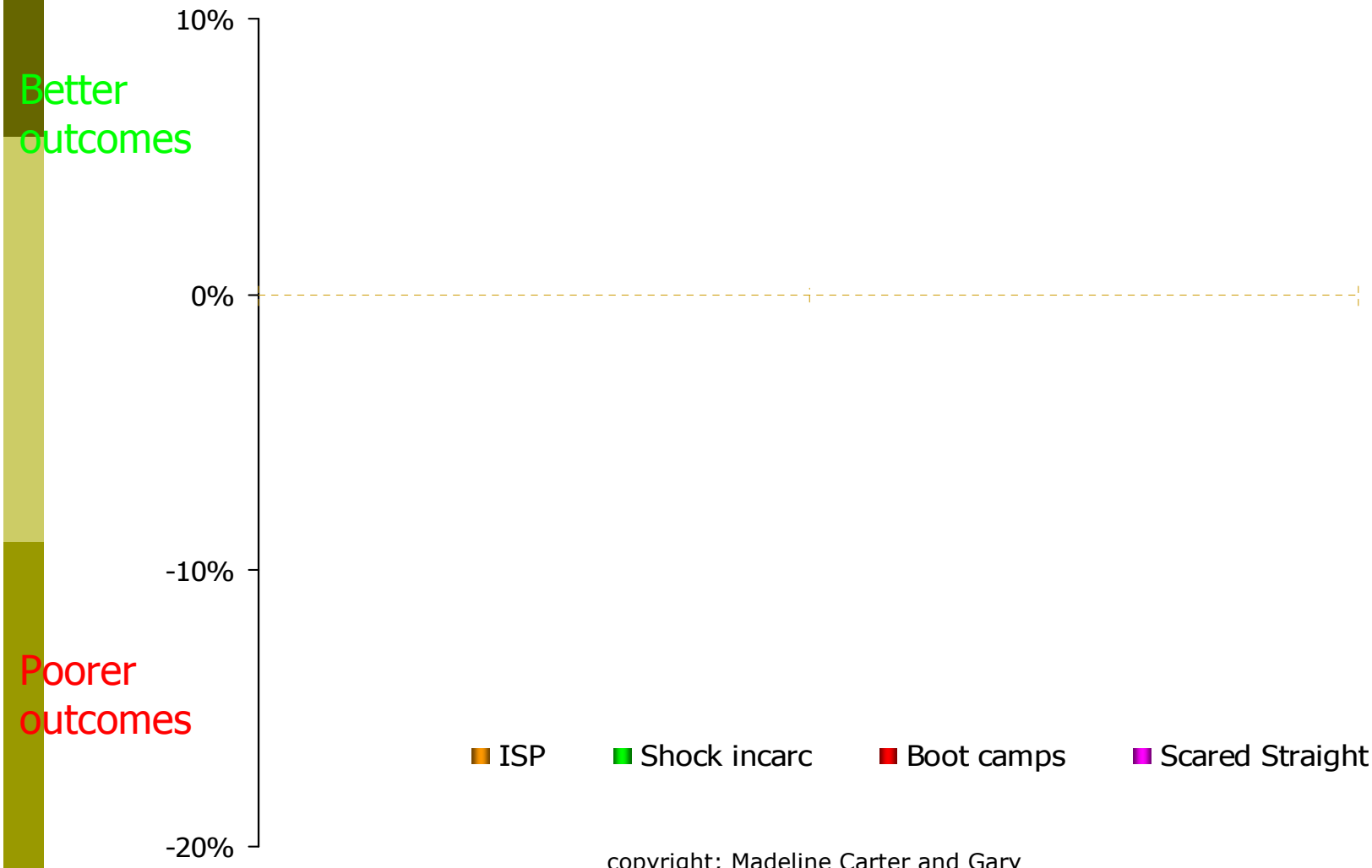

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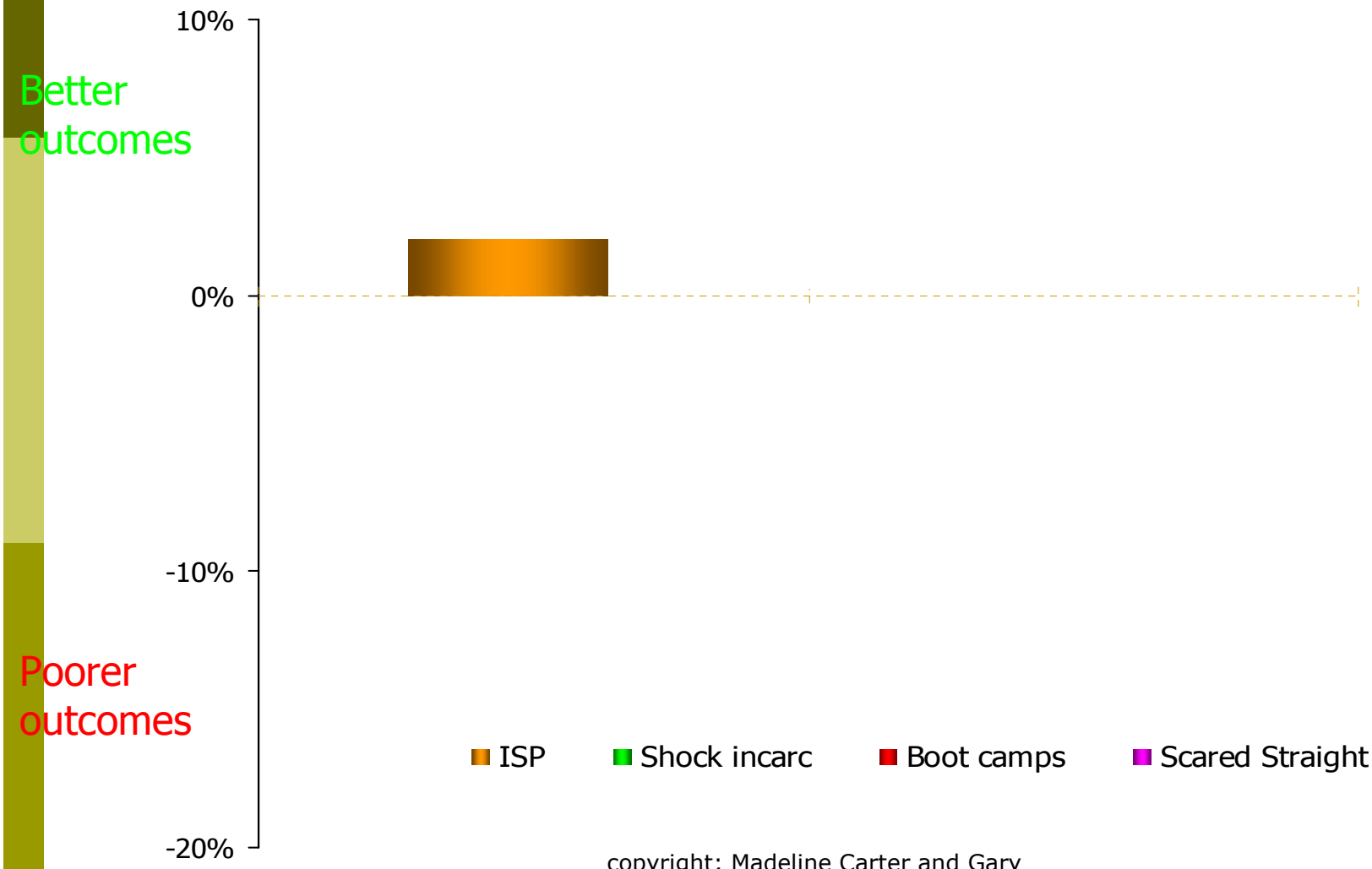

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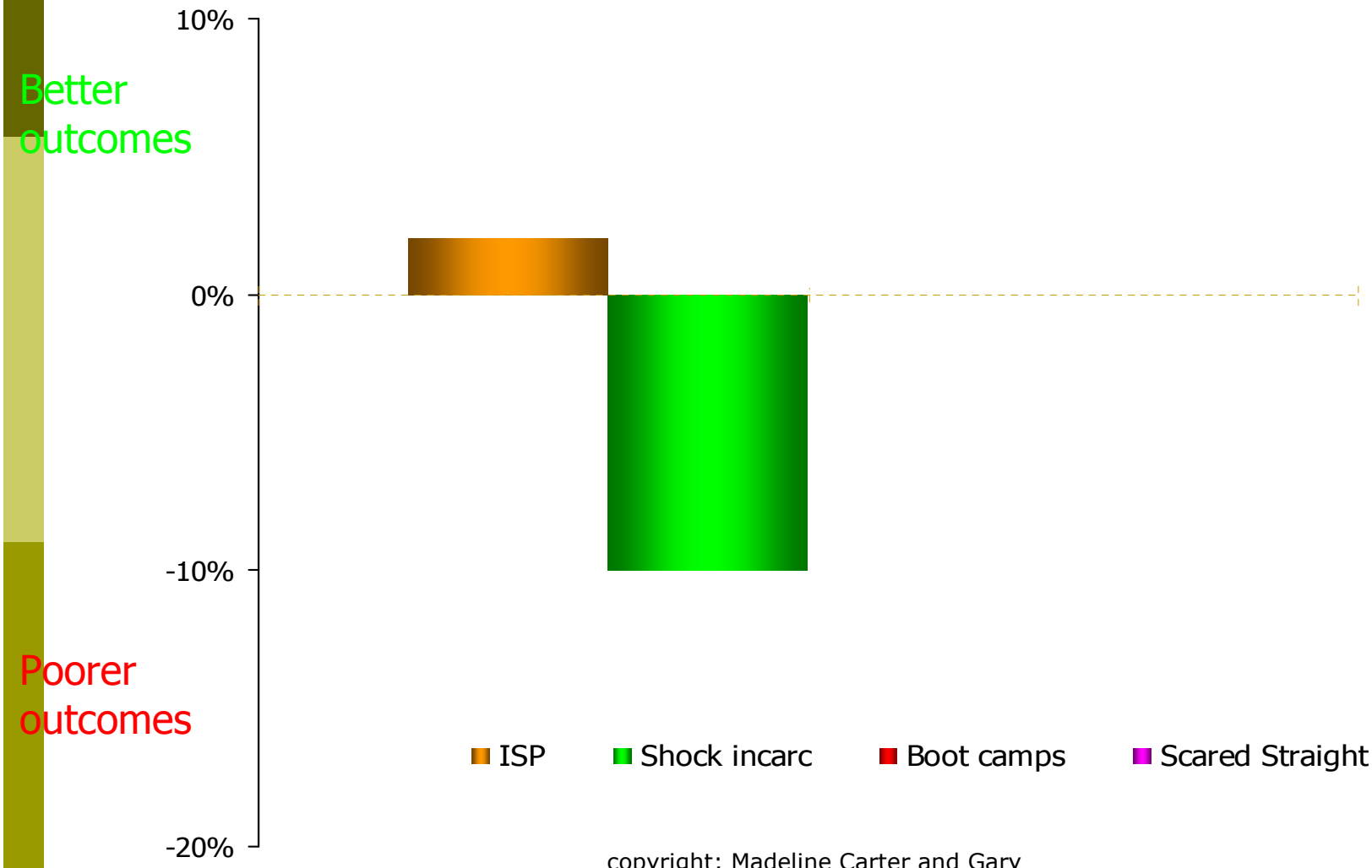

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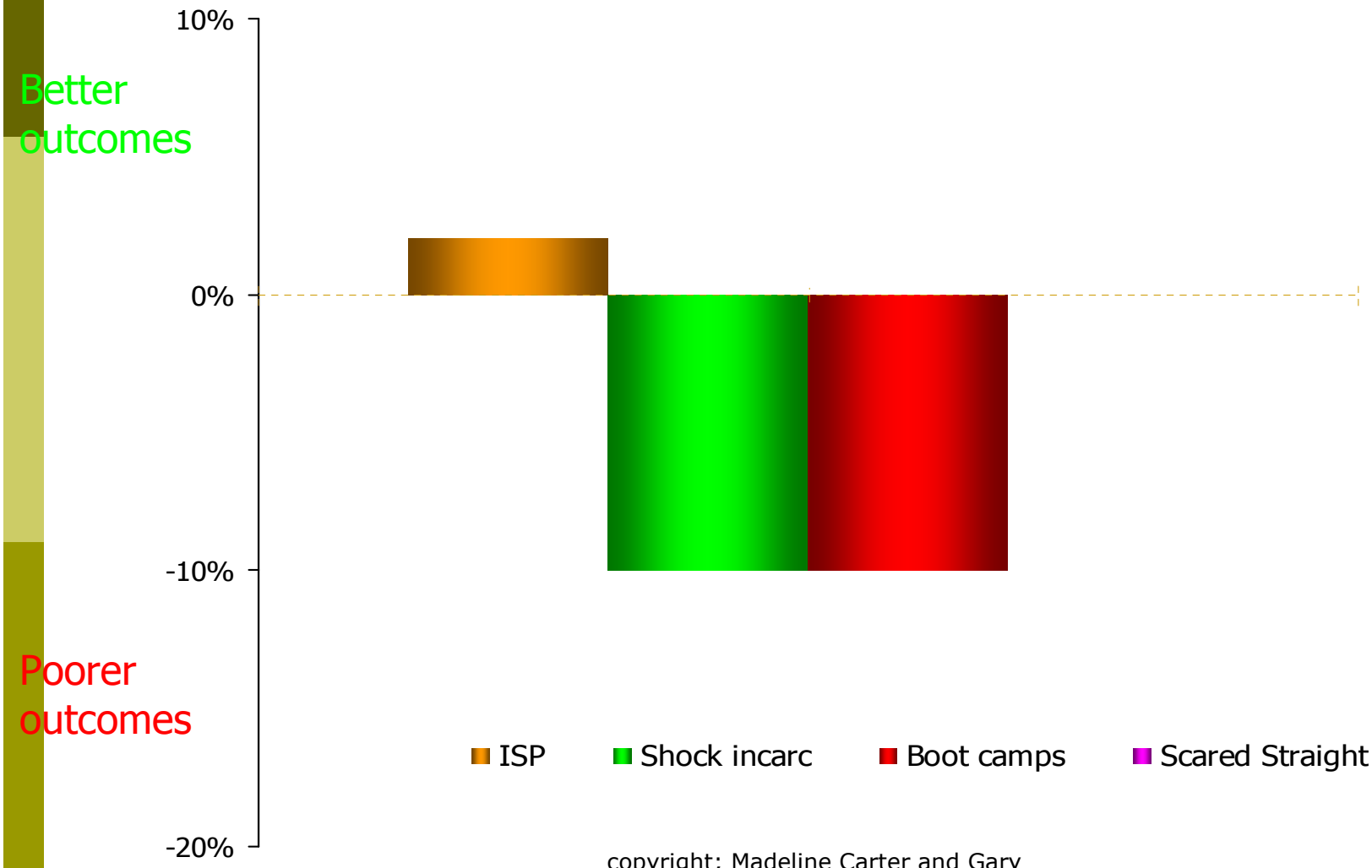

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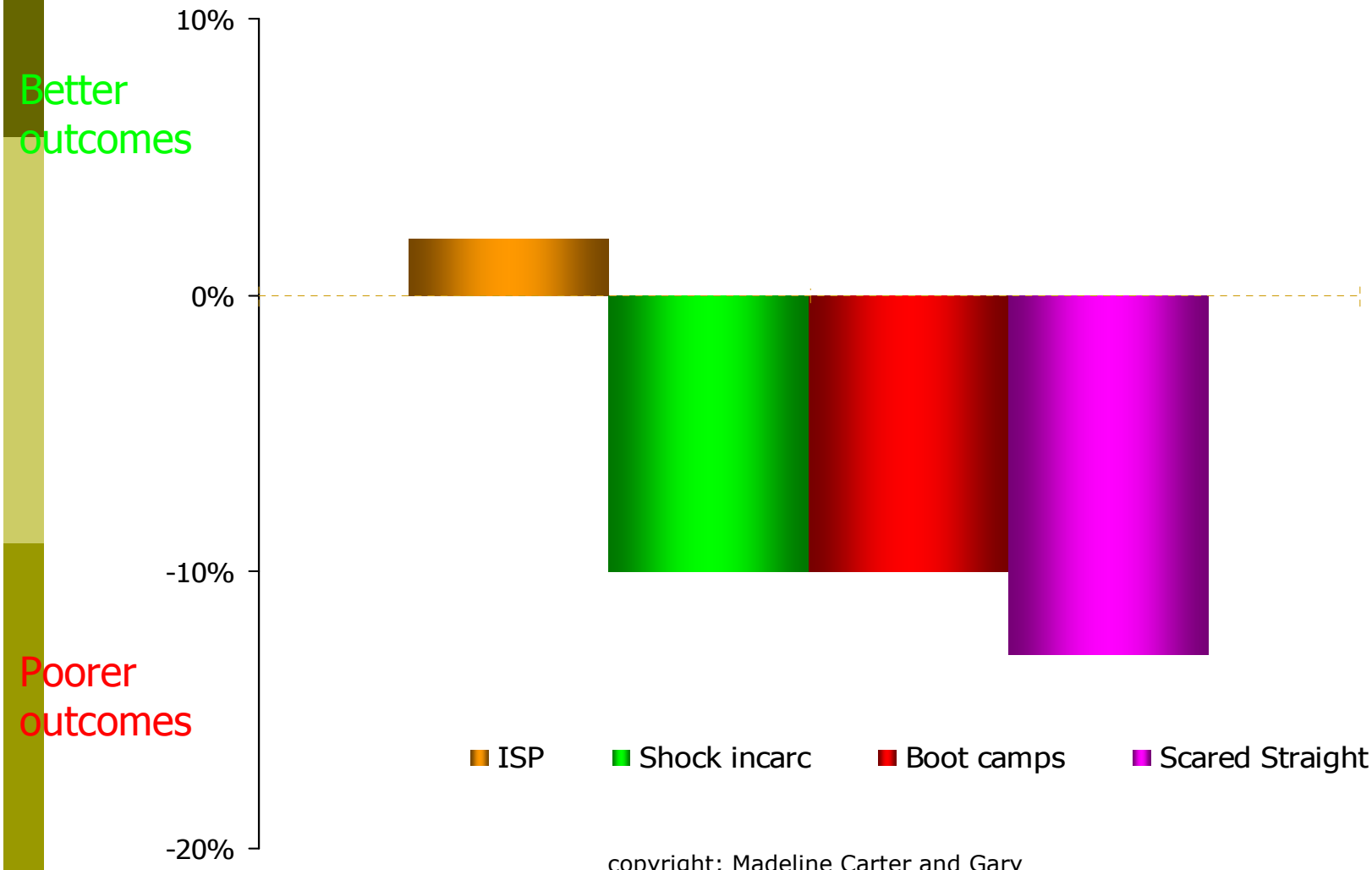

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(Aos et al., 2001; Lipsey & Wilson, 1998)

The Impact of Punishment and Deterrence-Driven Approaches

- Research demonstrates that punishment and deterrence-driven approaches used in isolation of other approaches have
  - Negligible impact;
  - No impact; or
  - Negative impact.

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(see Aos, 2006; Cullen & Gendreau, 2000; MacKenzie, 1998; Petersilia & Turner, 1993)

Pairing Rehabilitative Interventions with Supervision/Sanctions

- When paired with prosocial or rehabilitation-oriented interventions (e.g., treatment, education, community service)
  - Recidivism rates are reduced significantly
  - Re-arrests are as much as 20 percent lower

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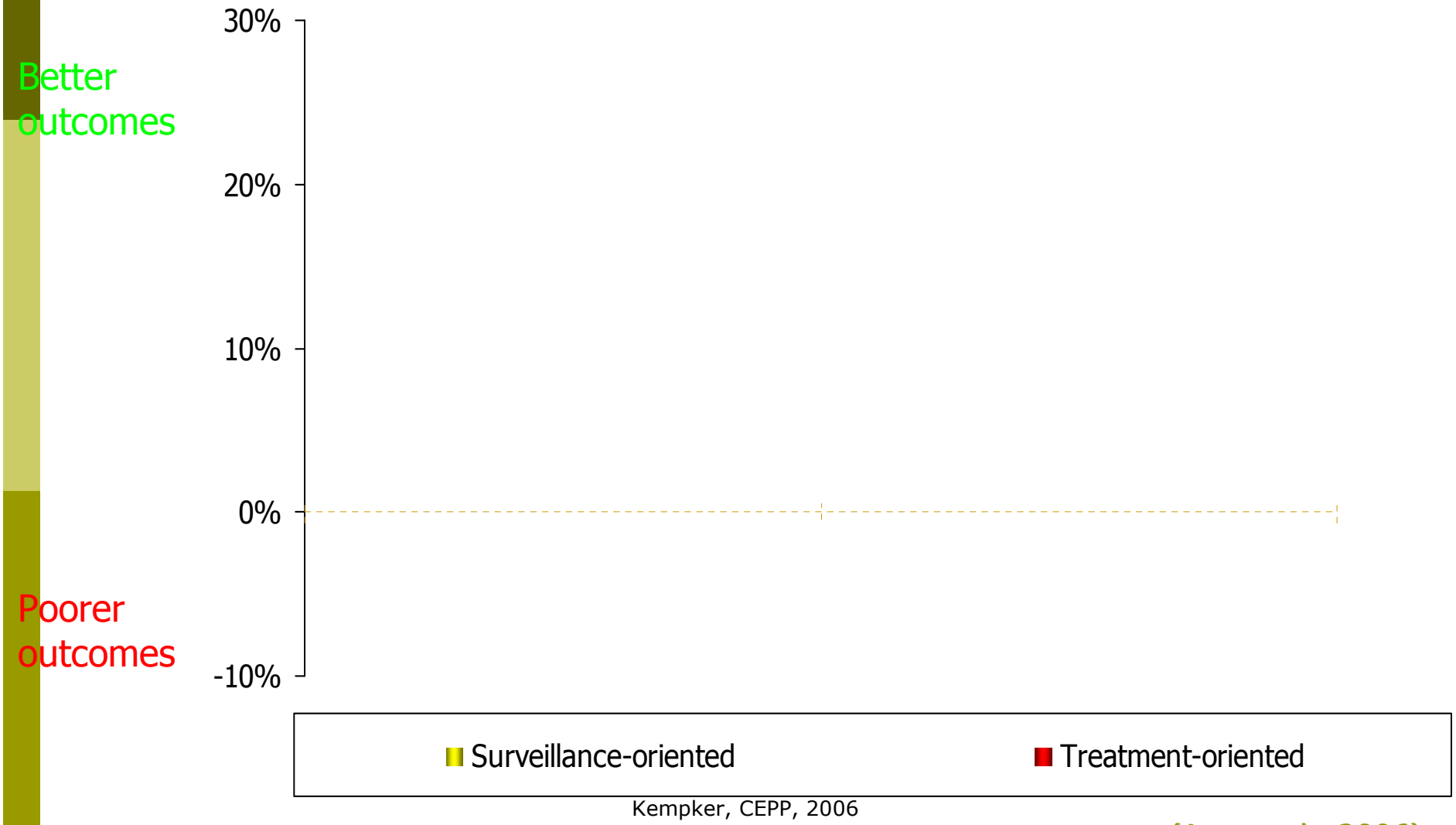
(see Aos, 2006; Cullen & Gendreau, 2000; MacKenzie, 1998; Petersilia & Turner, 1993)

Intervention Effects by Supervision Approach



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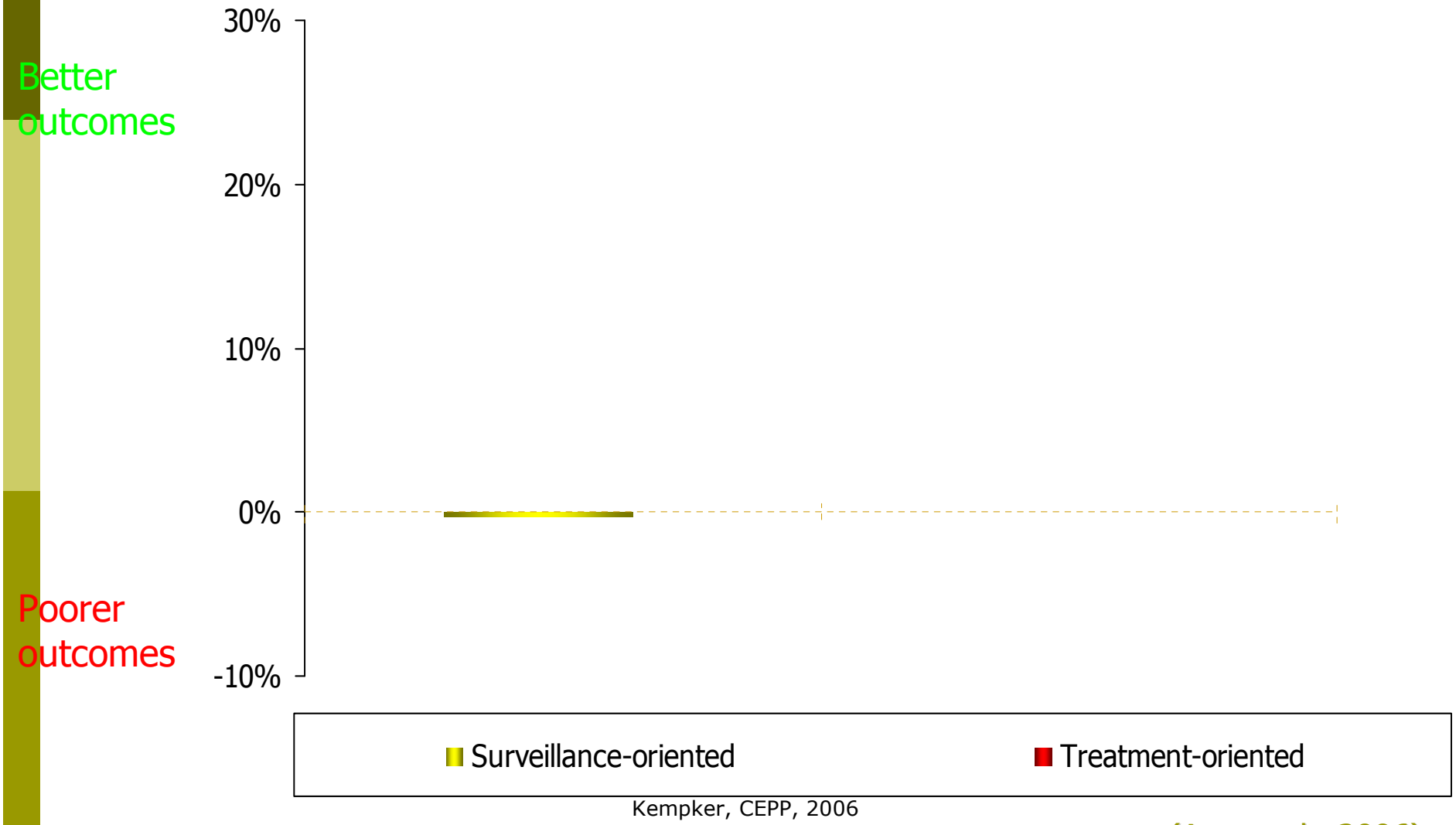
(Aos et al., 2006)

Intervention Effects by Supervision Approach



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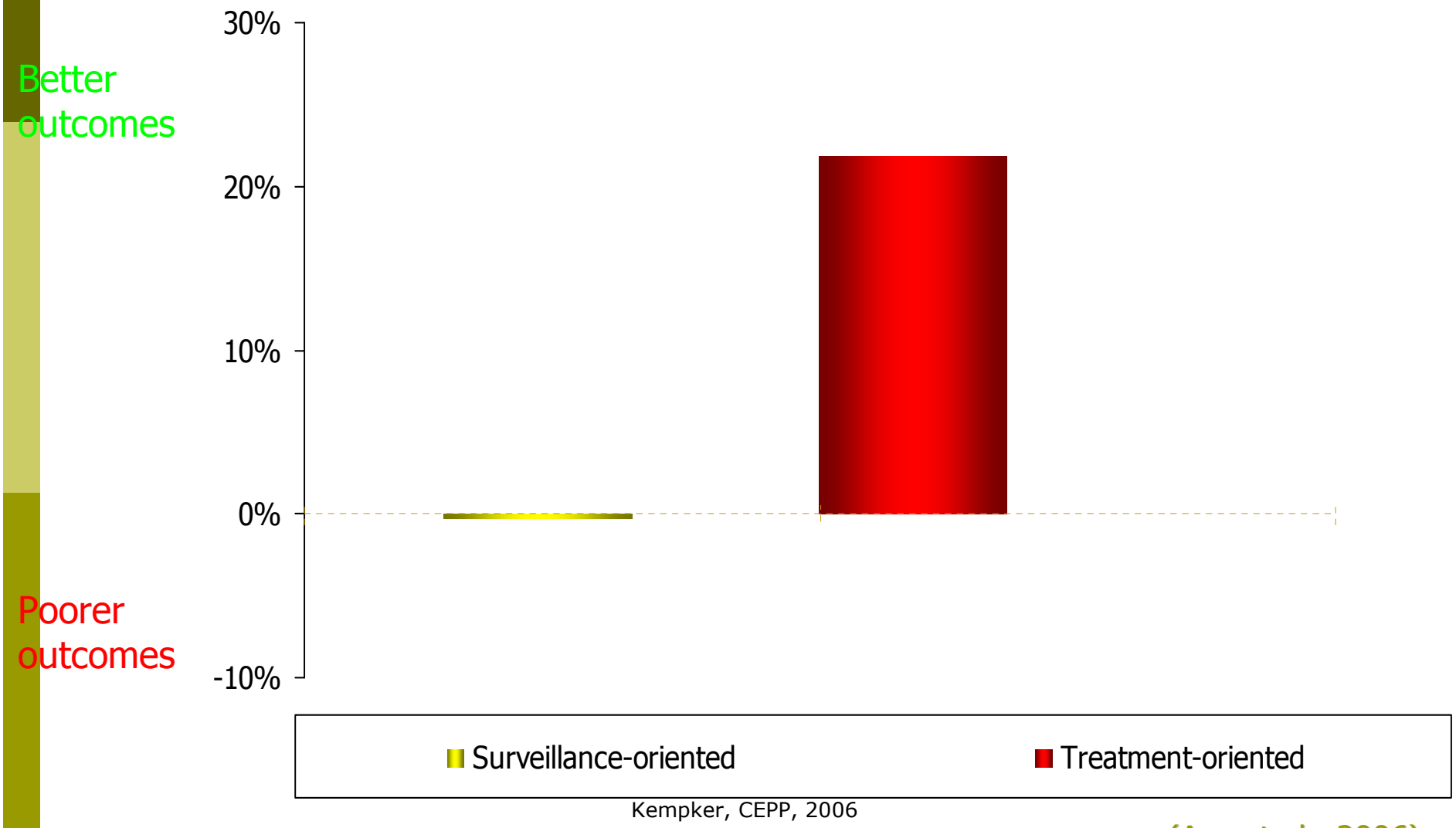

(Aos et al., 2006)

Which interventions and strategies have evidence to support the desired outcomes?

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Impact of Effective Interventions: Adults

Well-designed and well-delivered programs can reduce recidivism by as much as 30% for adult offenders

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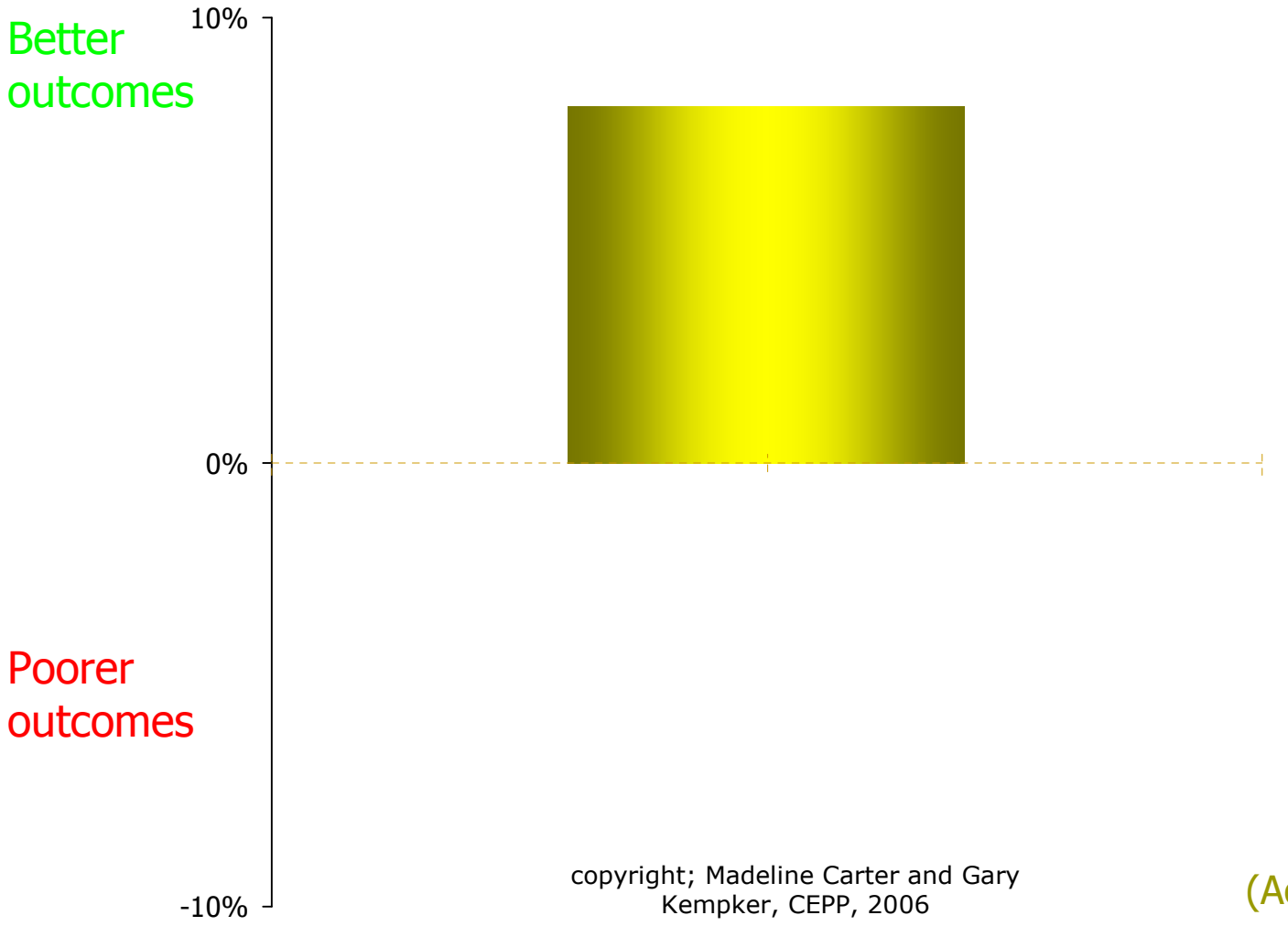
(see, e.g., Andrews et al., 1990, 1999; Cullen & Gendreau, 2000; Gendreau, Smith, & Goggin, 2001)

Intervention Effects for Adult Offenders: Cognitive Skills/Cognitive-Behavioral Programs



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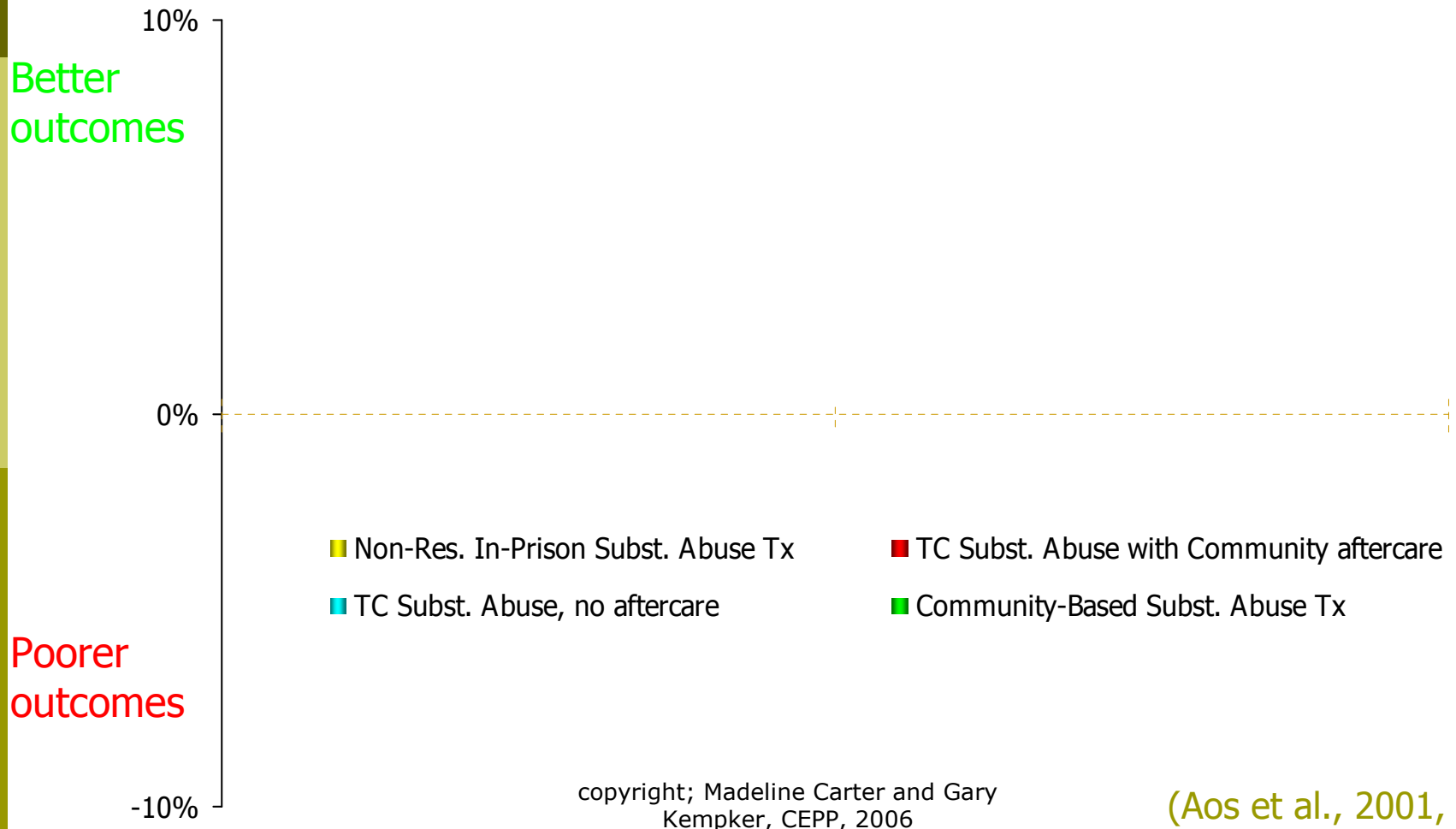
(Aos et al., 2001, 2006)

Intervention Effects for Adult Offenders: Substance Abuse Treatment



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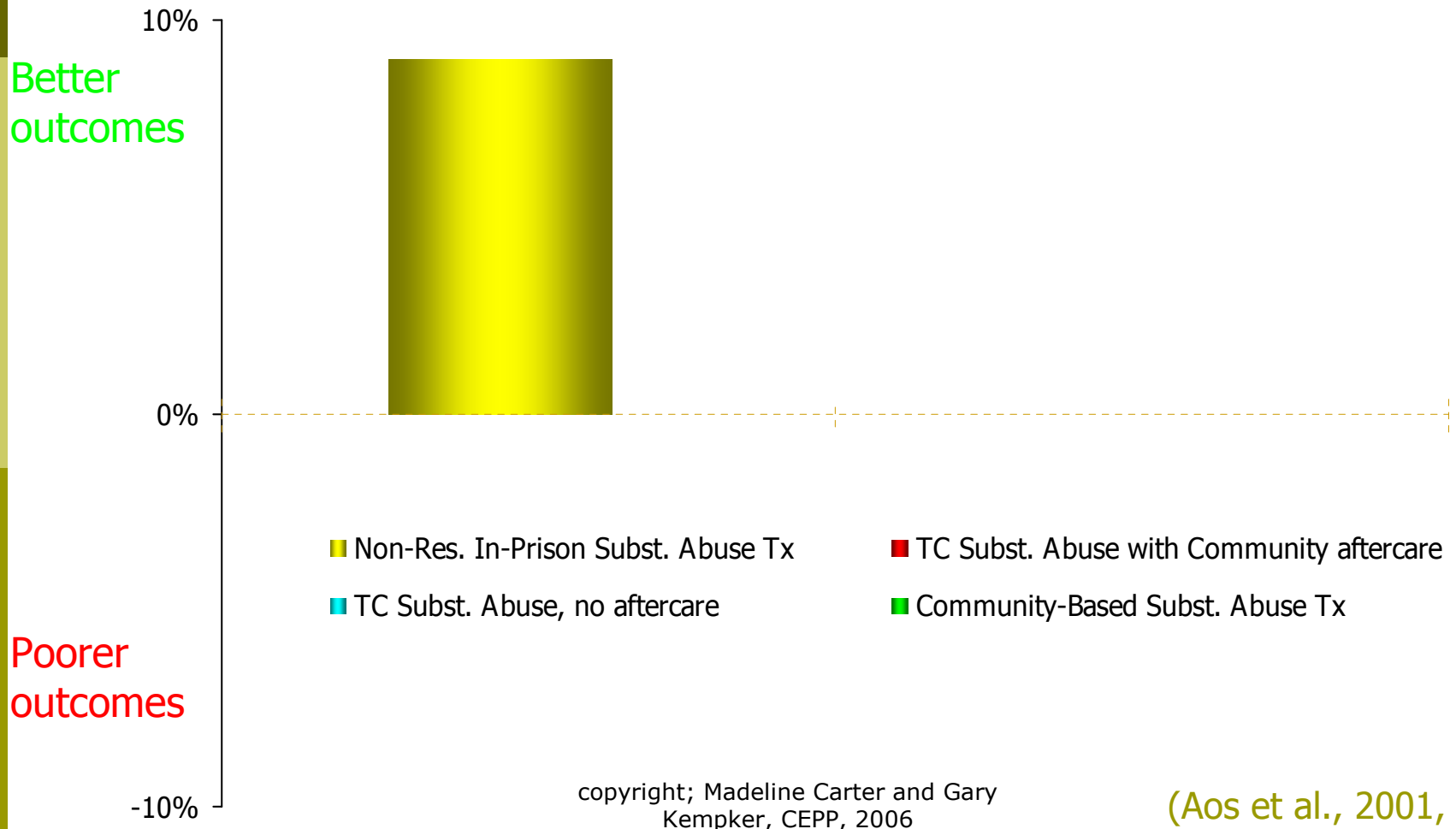

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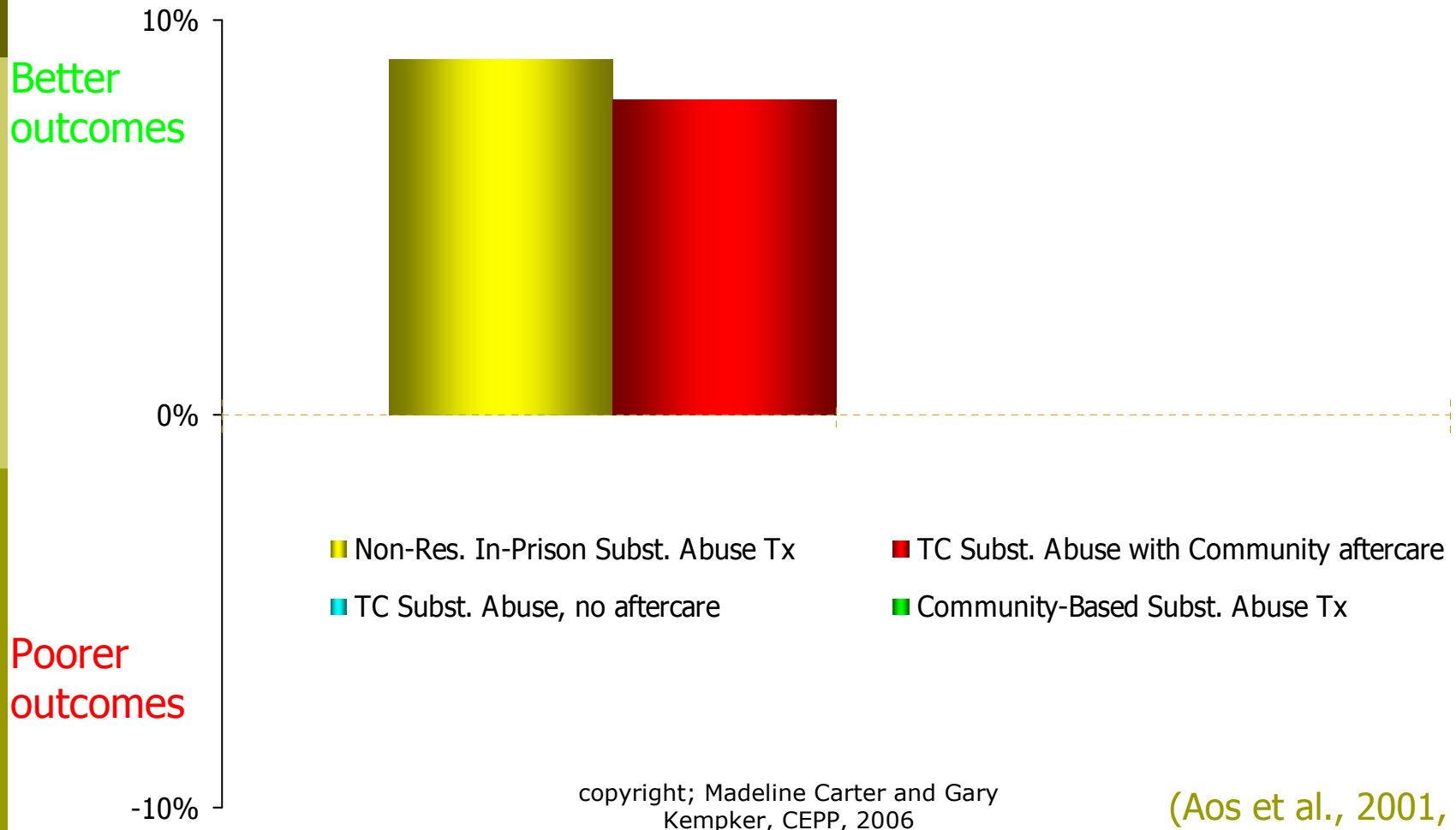

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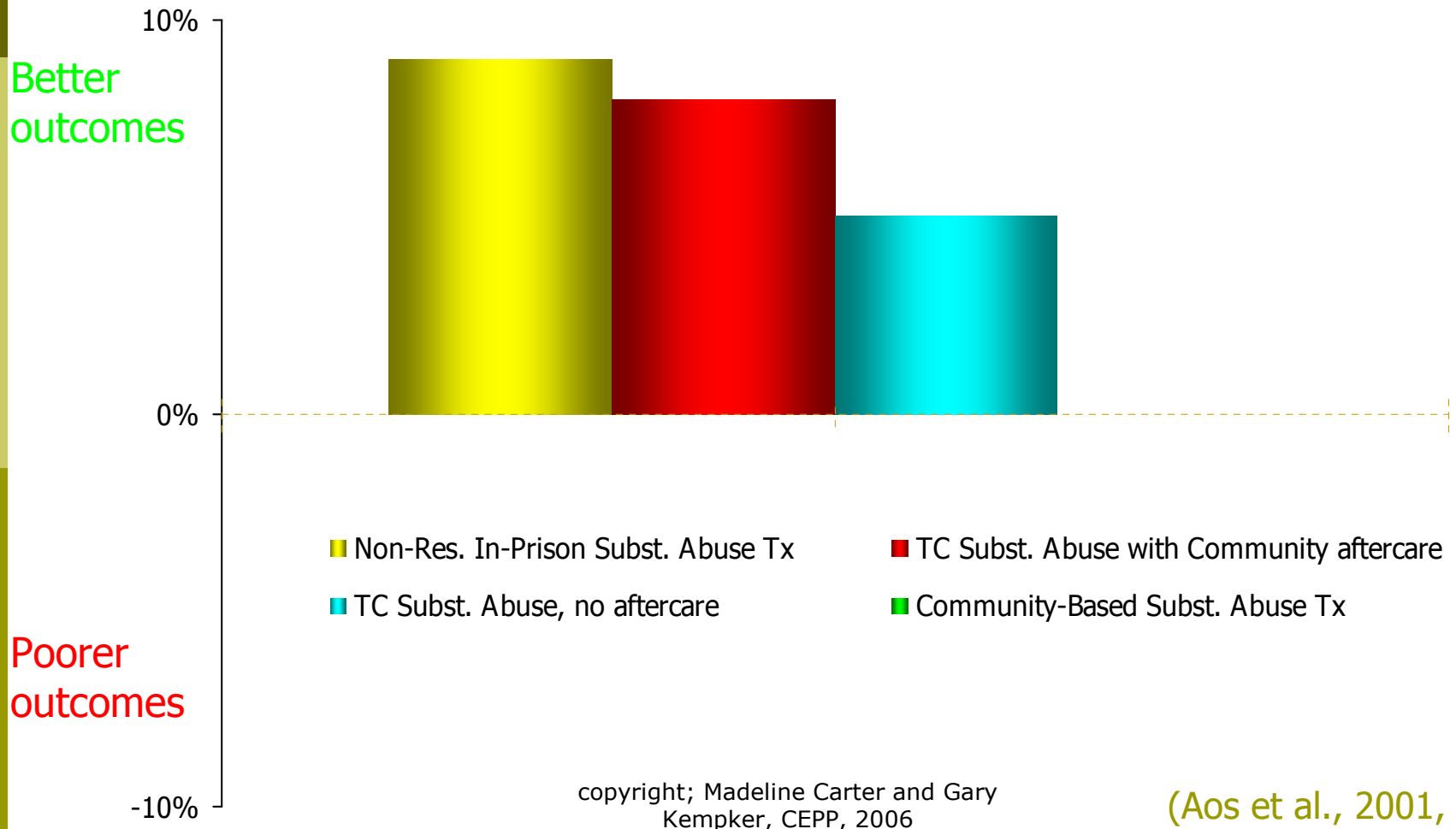

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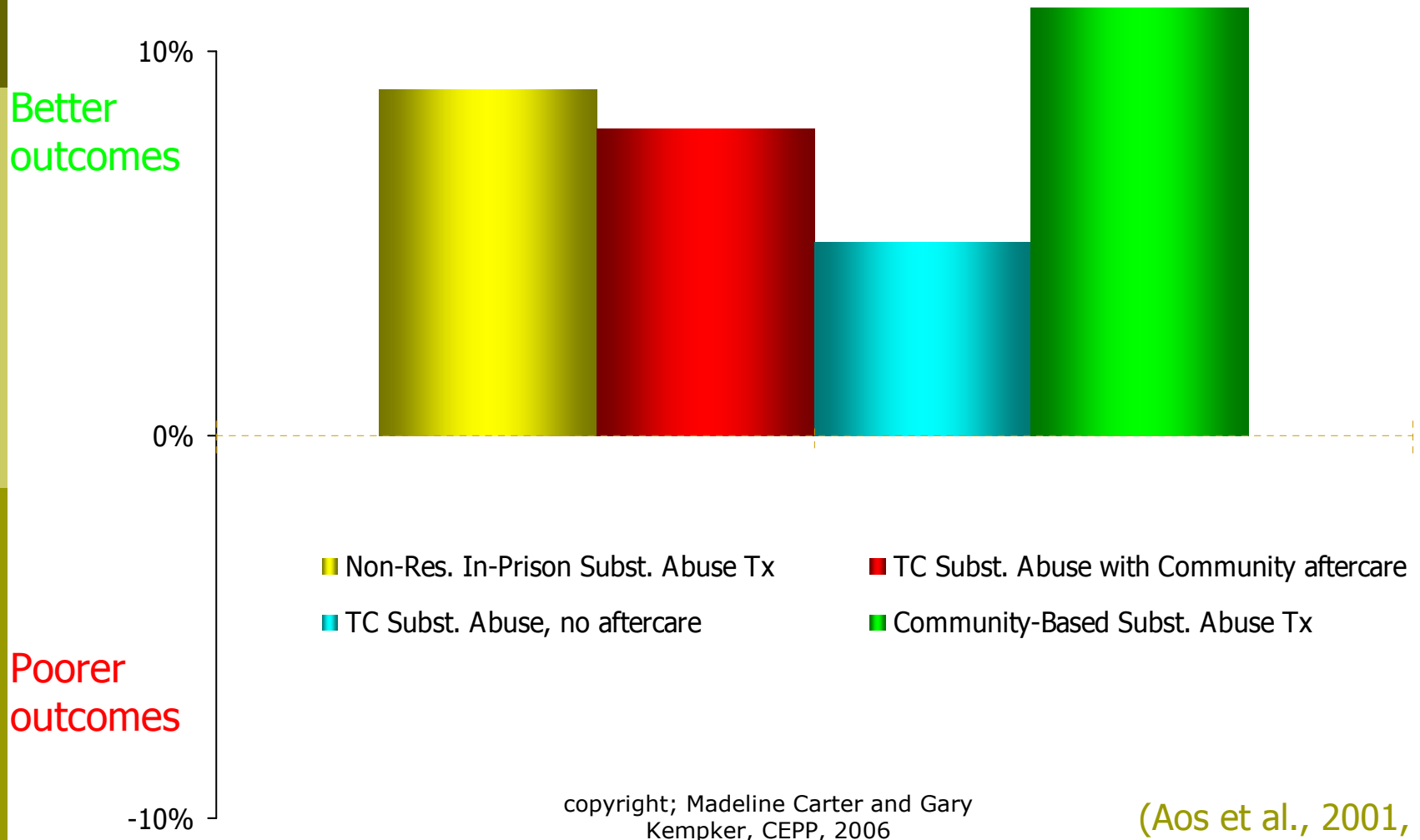
Intervention Effects for Adult Offenders: Substance Abuse Treatment



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Intervention Effects for Adult Offenders: Education/Vocational Programs and Services

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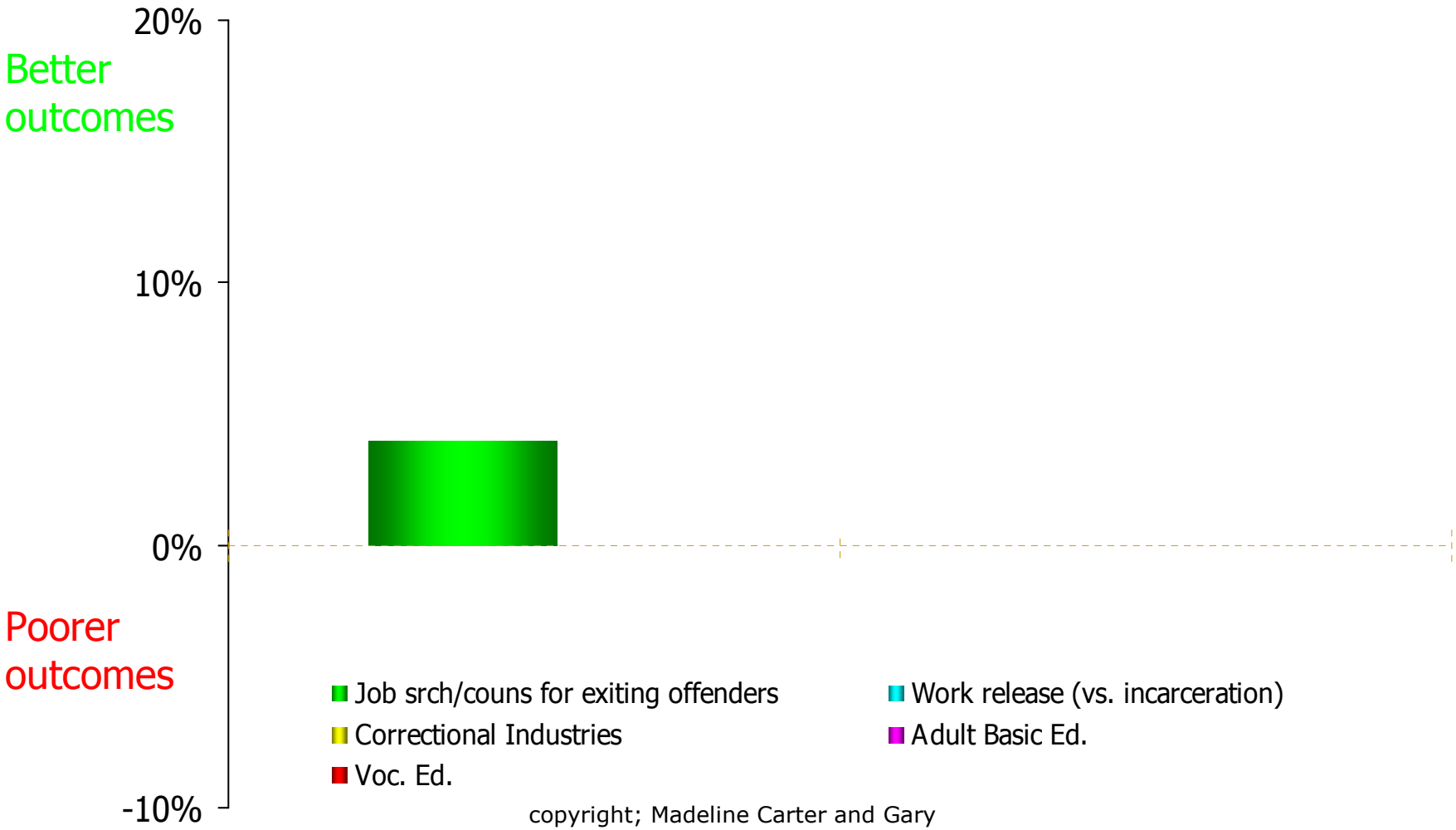
Intervention Effects for Adult Offenders: Education/Vocational Programs and Services



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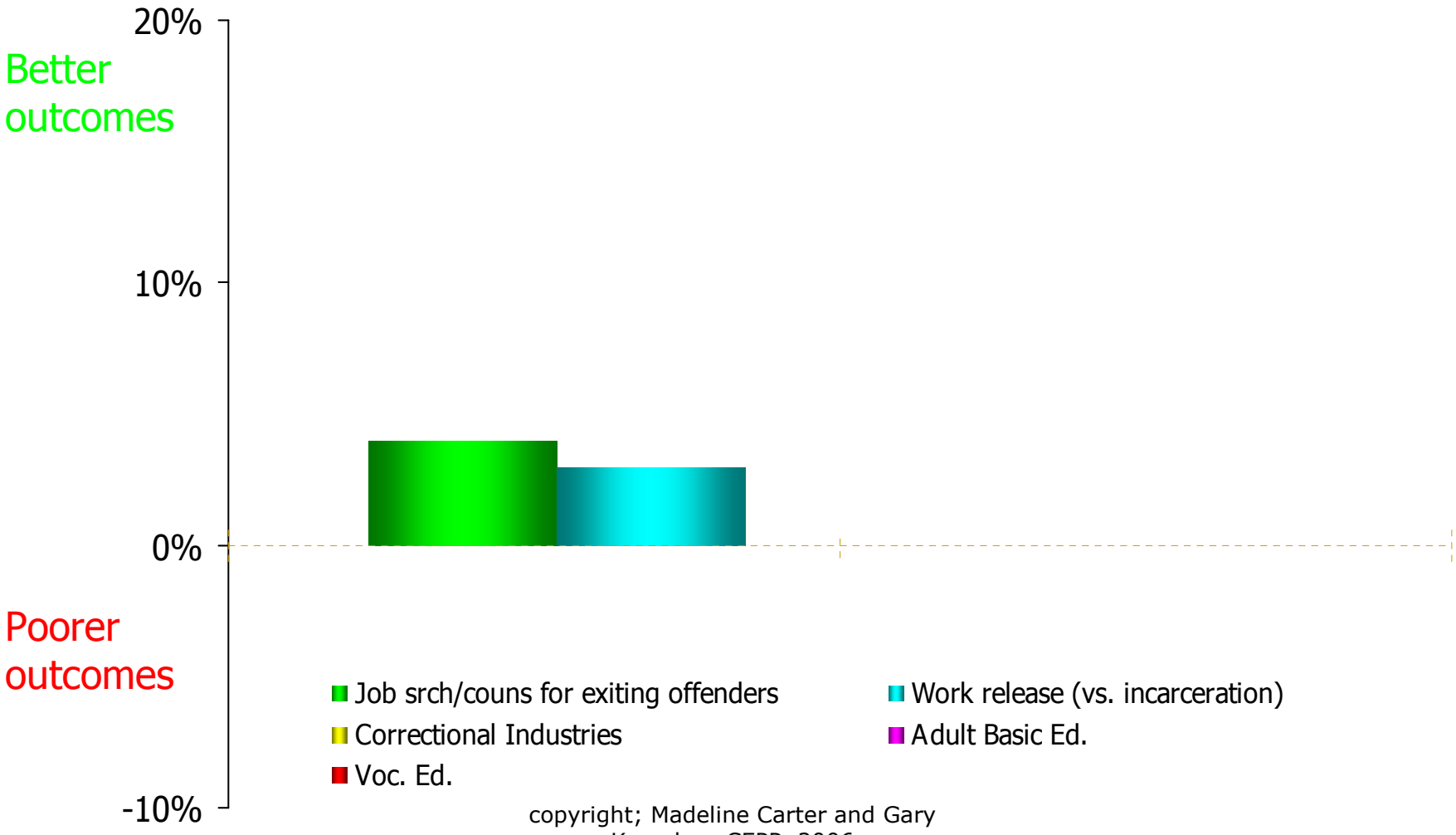

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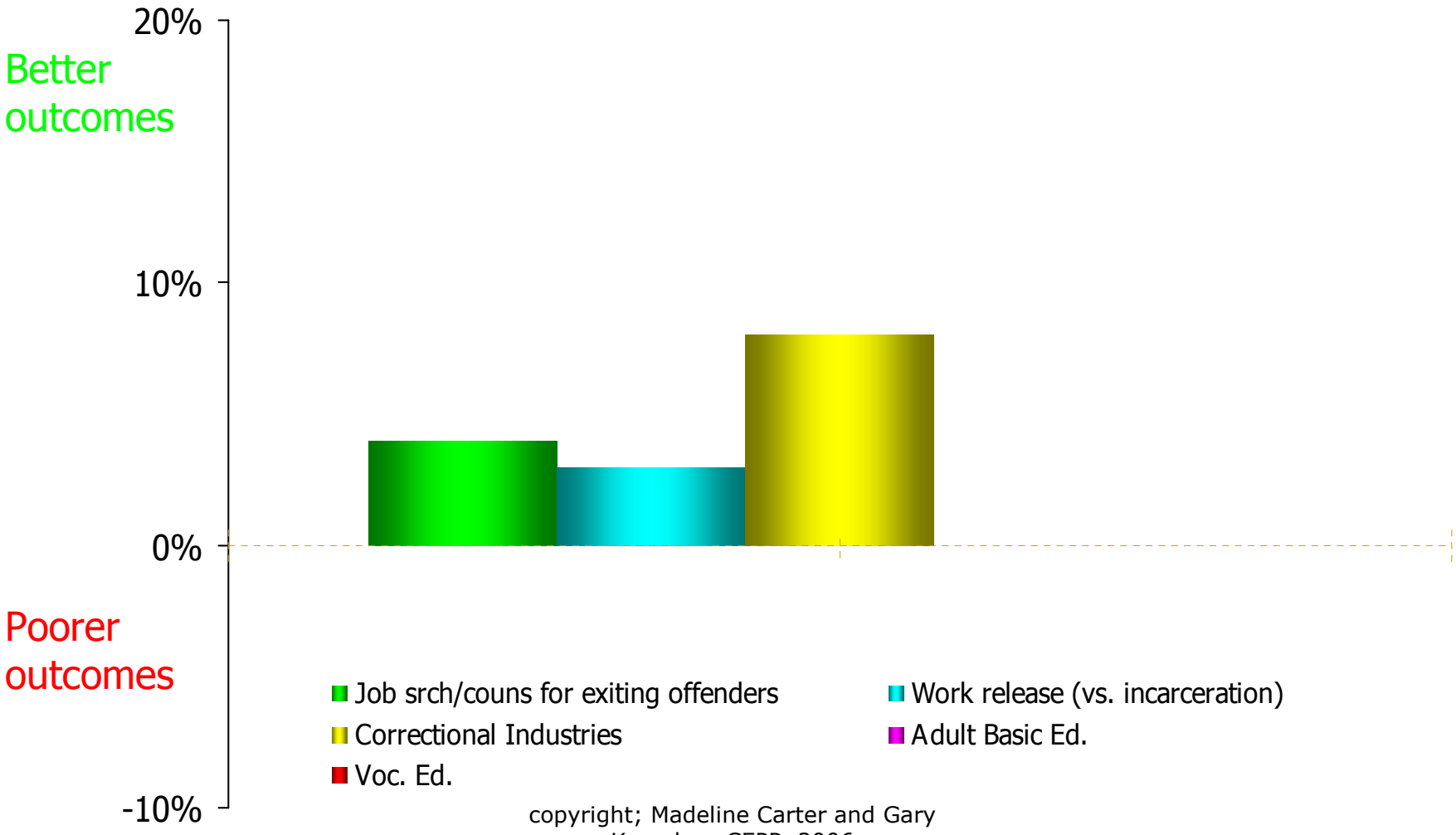

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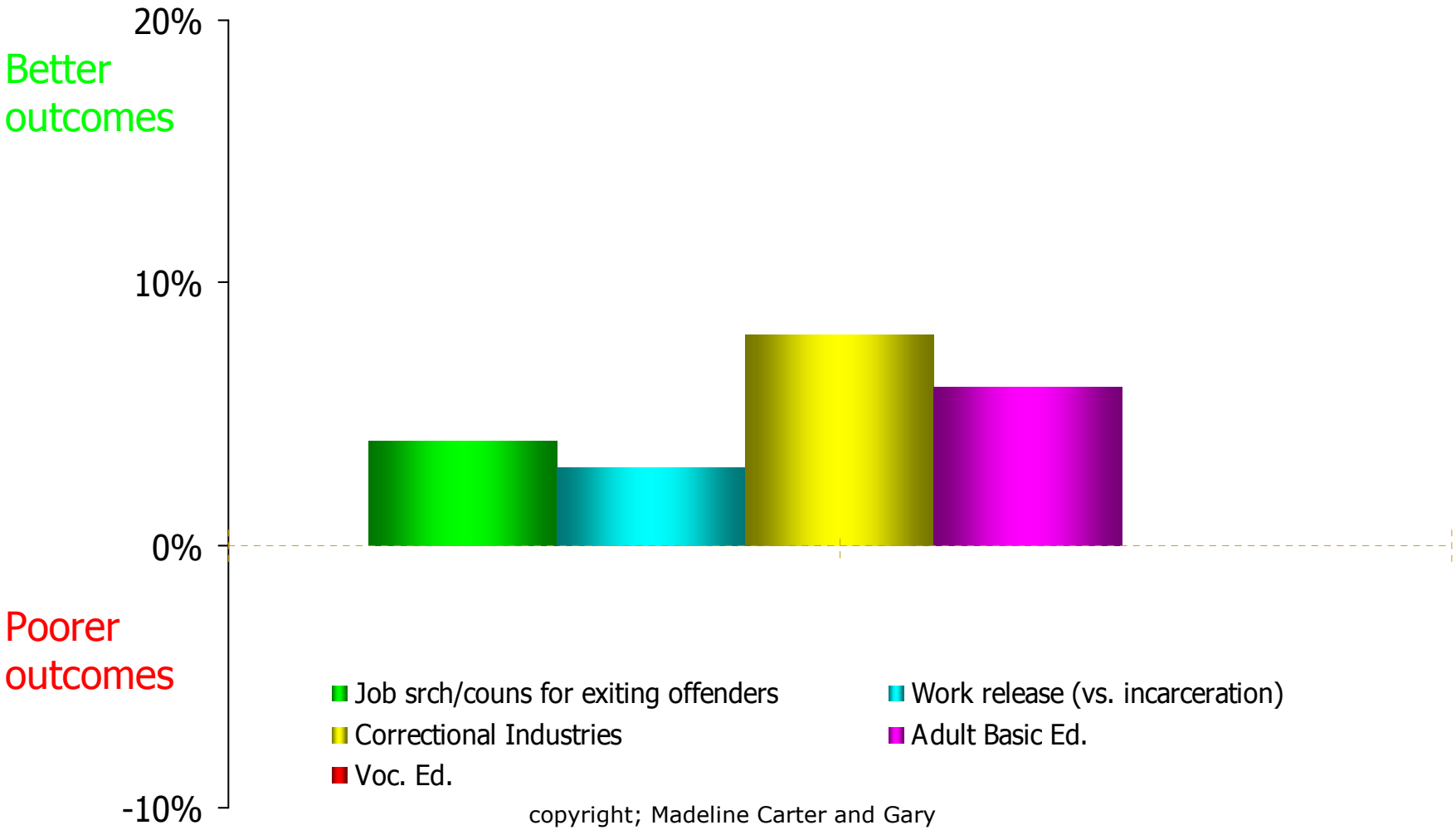
Intervention Effects for Adult Offenders: Education/Vocational Programs and Services



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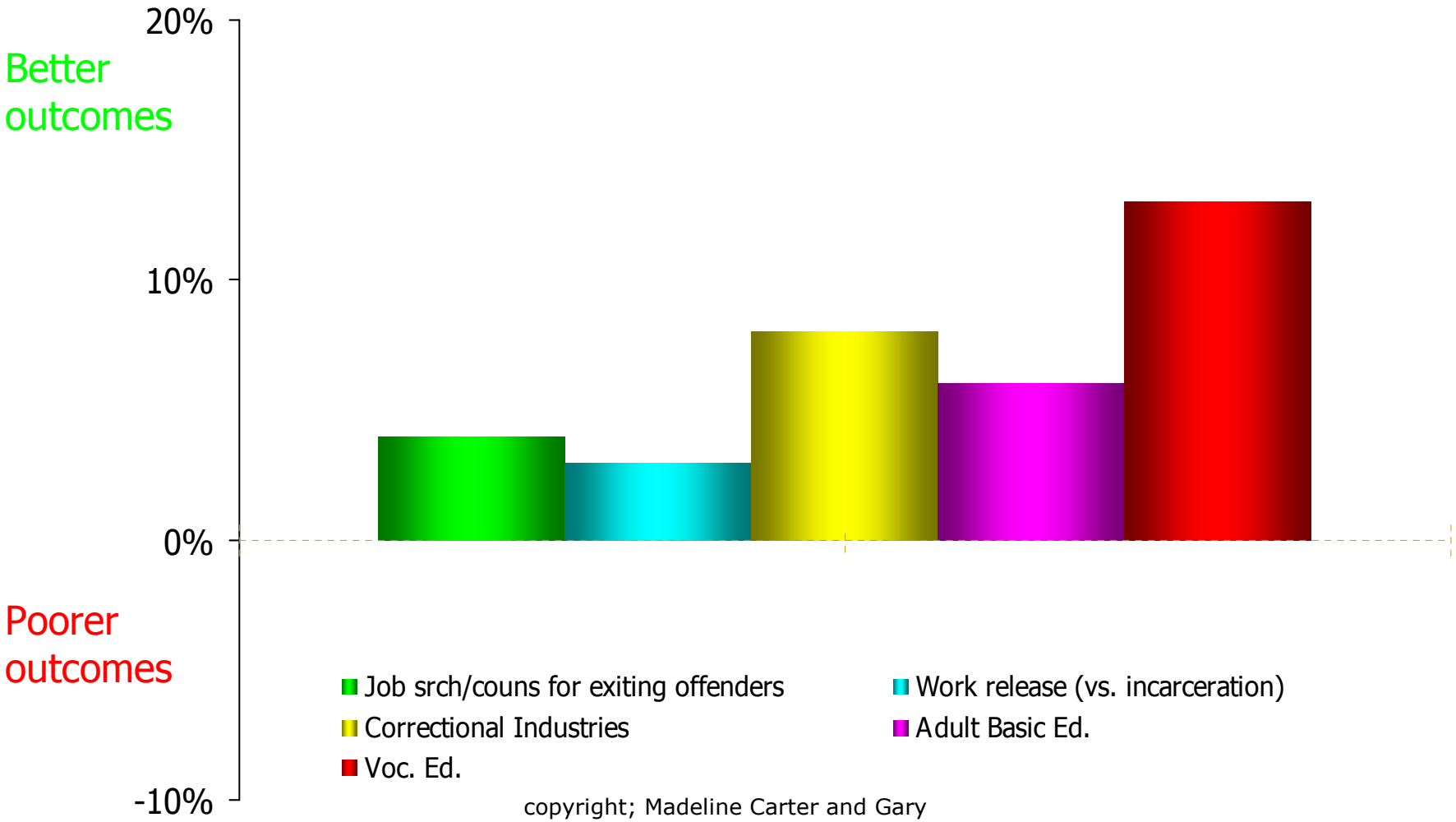
(Aos et al., 2001, 2006)

Intervention Effects for Adult Offenders: Education/Vocational Programs and Services



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(Aos et al., 2001, 2006)

Impact of Effective Interventions: Juveniles

Estimates across meta-analyses suggest that interventions overall can result in up to 30% reductions in problem behaviors and recidivism for juveniles

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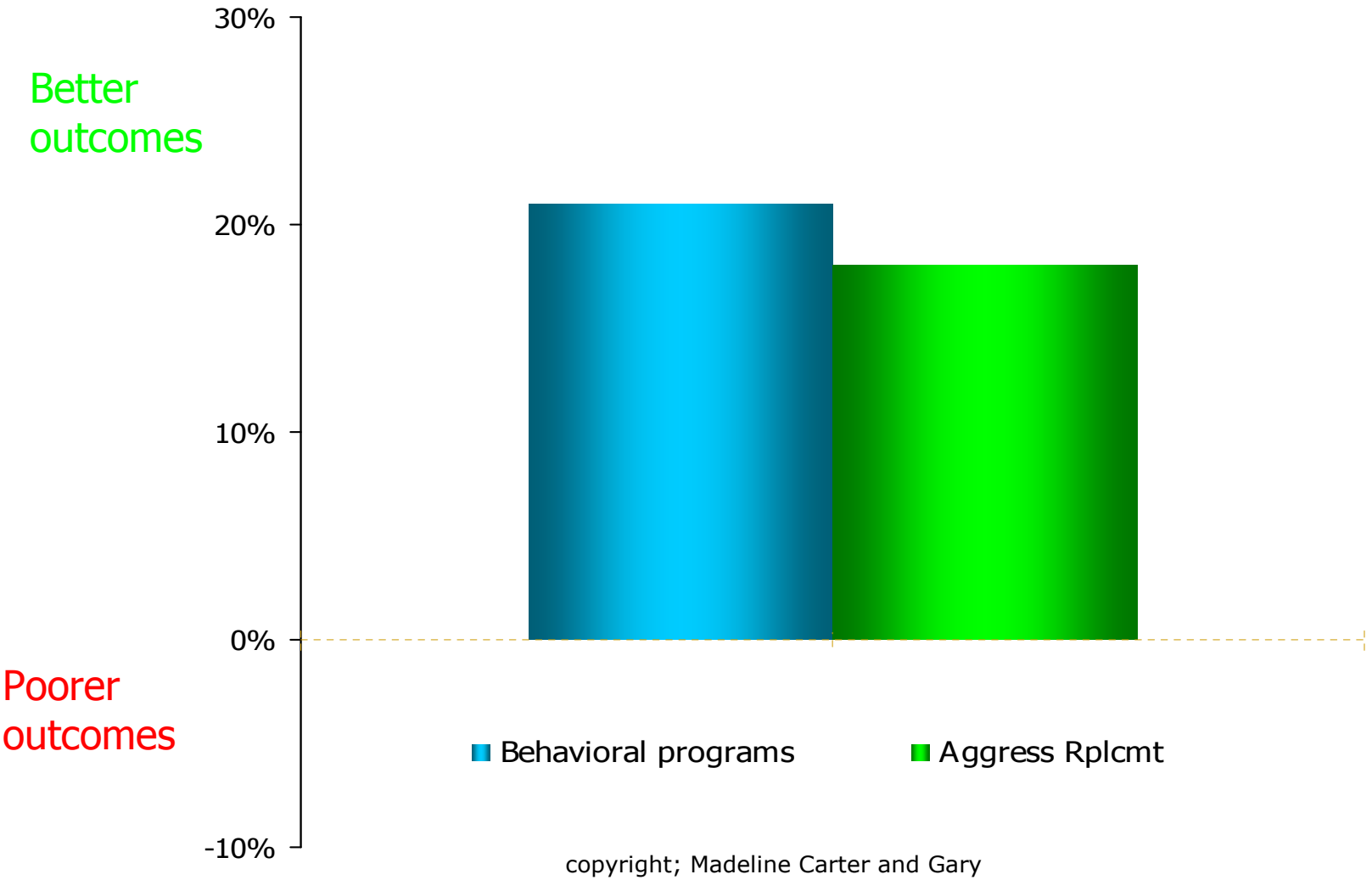
(see, e.g., Lipsey, 1992; Lipsey & Wilson, 1993, 1998; Losel, 1995: MacKenzie, 1998)

Intervention Effects for Juvenile Offenders: Cognitive-Behavioral



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Intervention Effects for Juvenile Offenders

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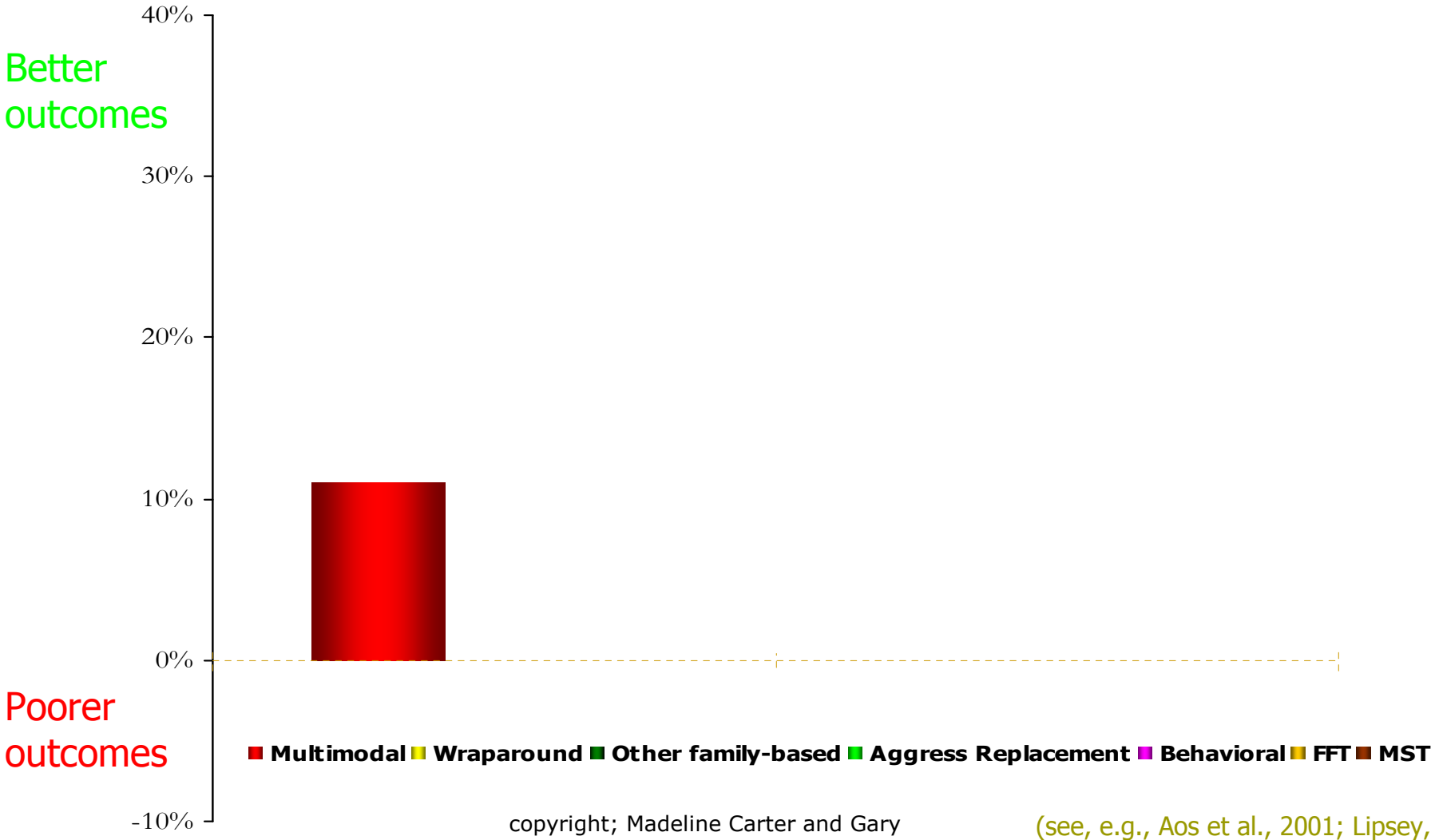
Intervention Effects for Juvenile Offenders



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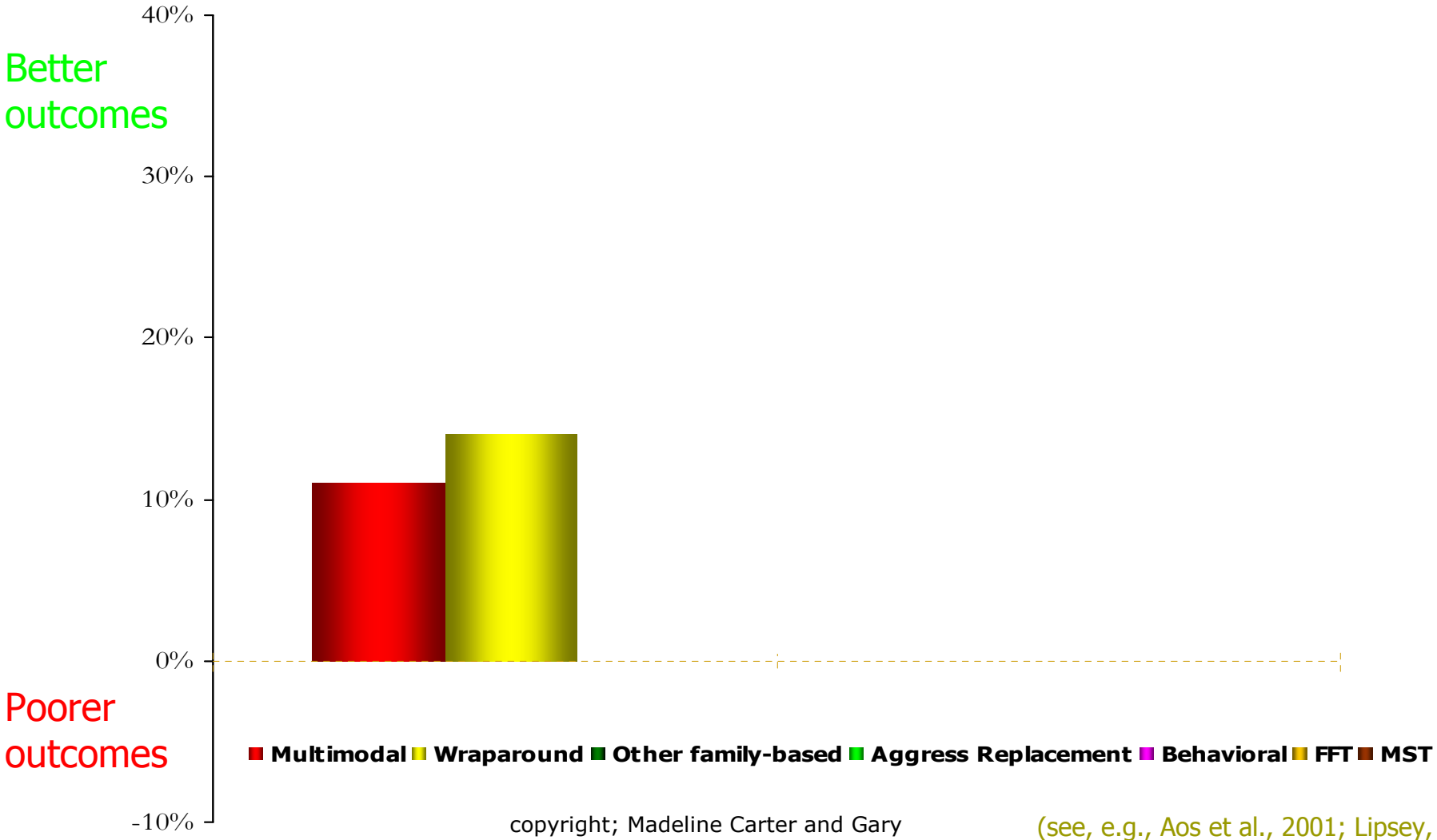
Intervention Effects for Juvenile Offenders



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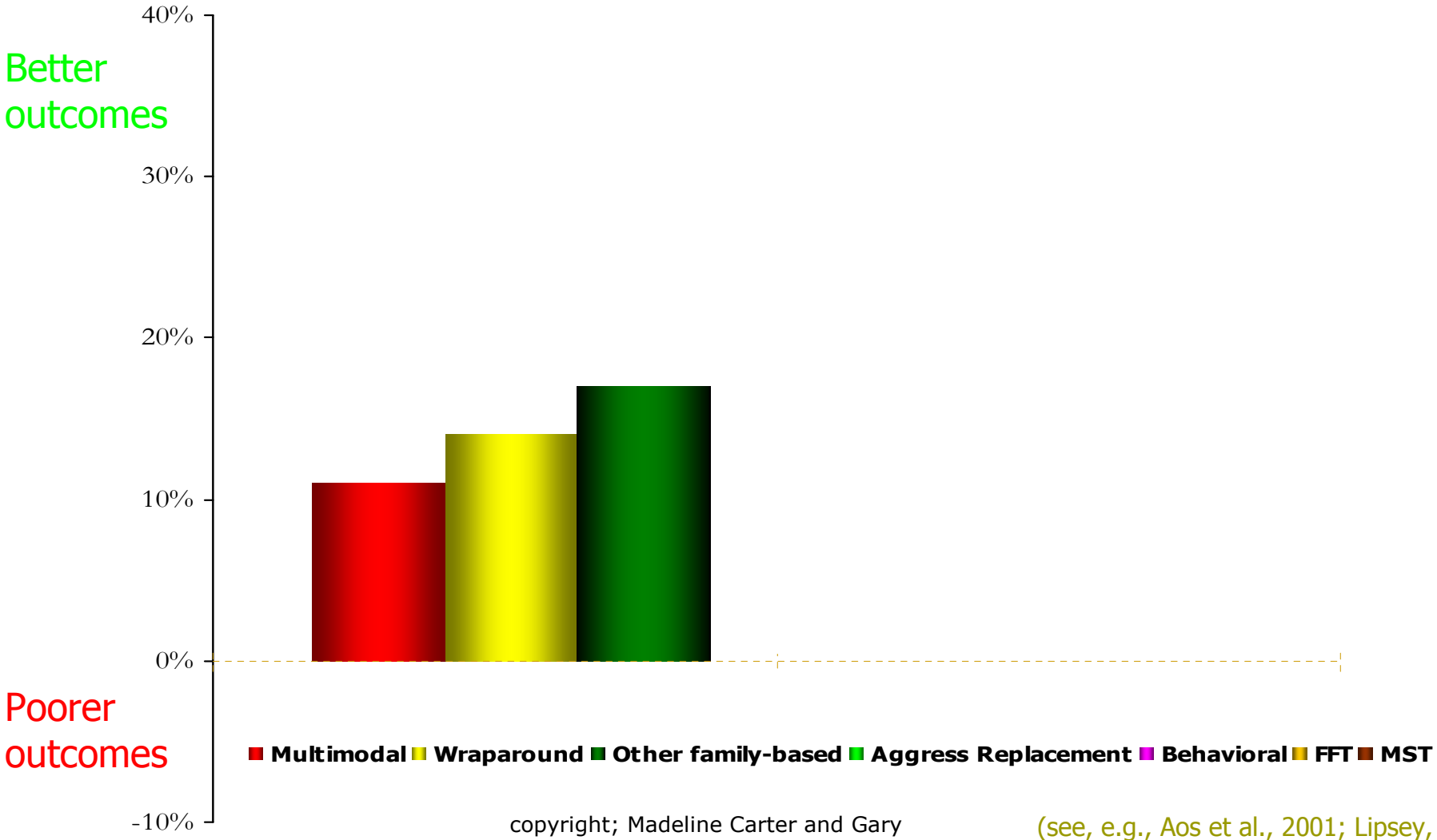

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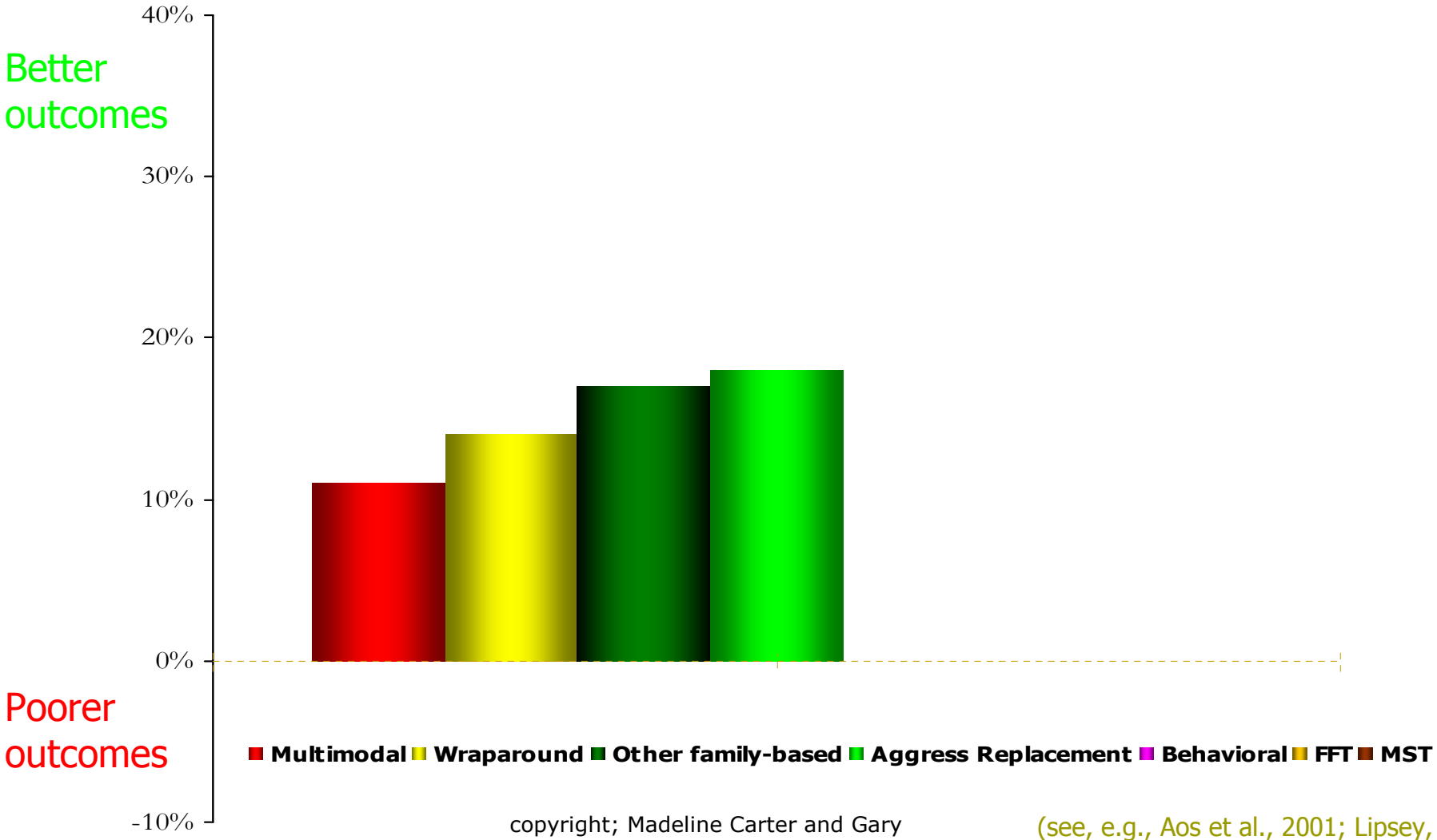
Intervention Effects for Juvenile Offenders



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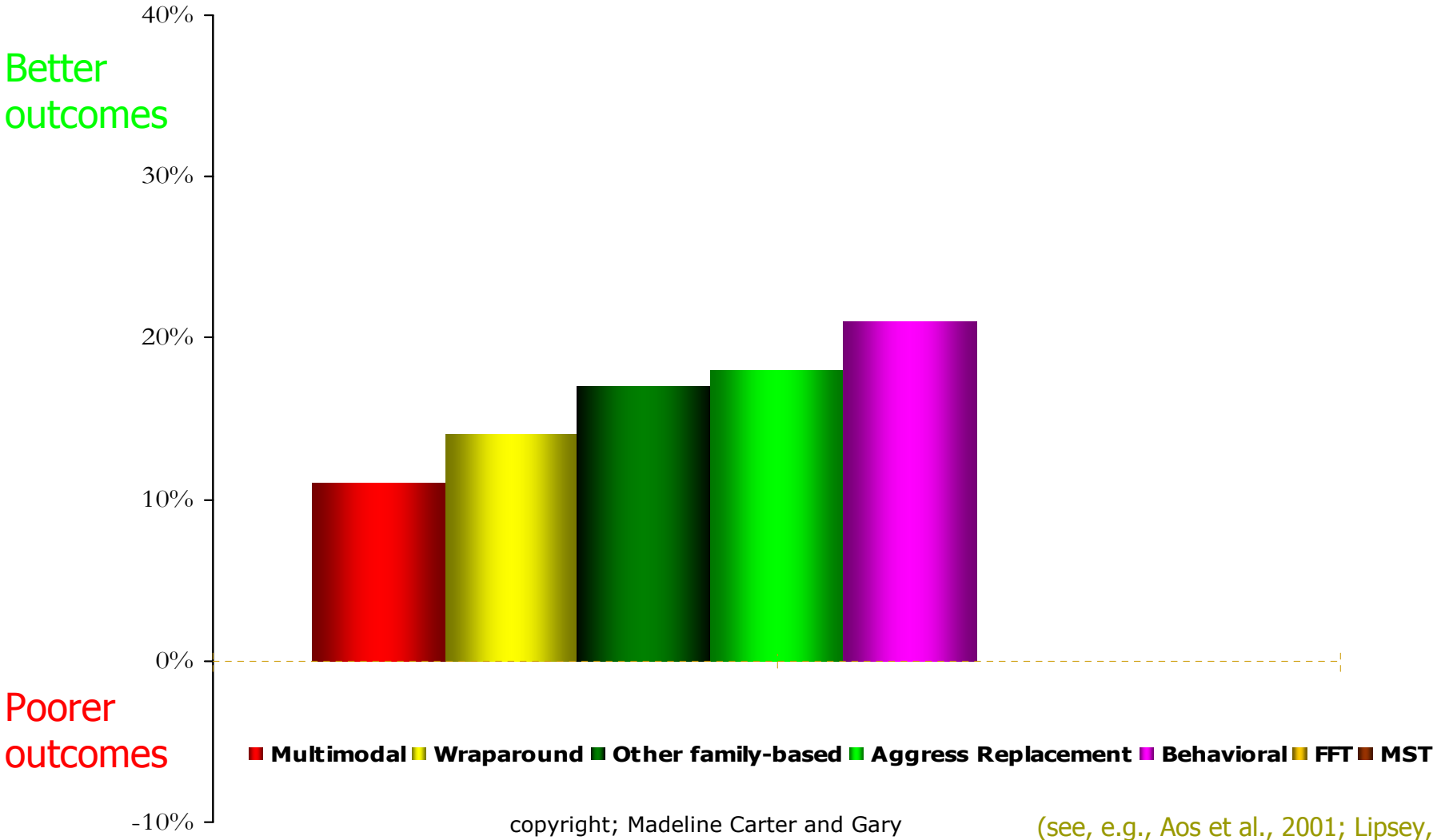

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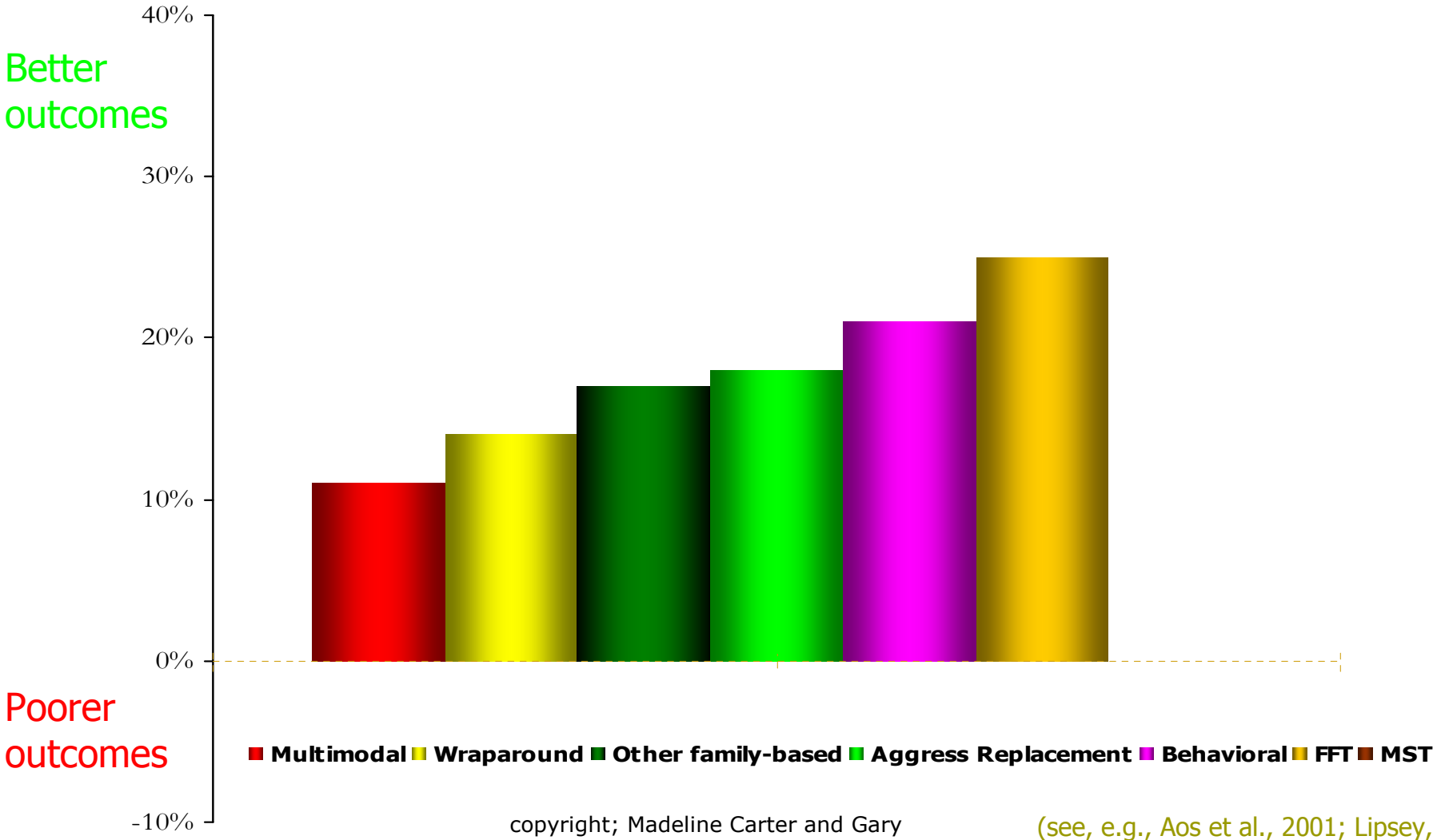
Intervention Effects for Juvenile Offenders



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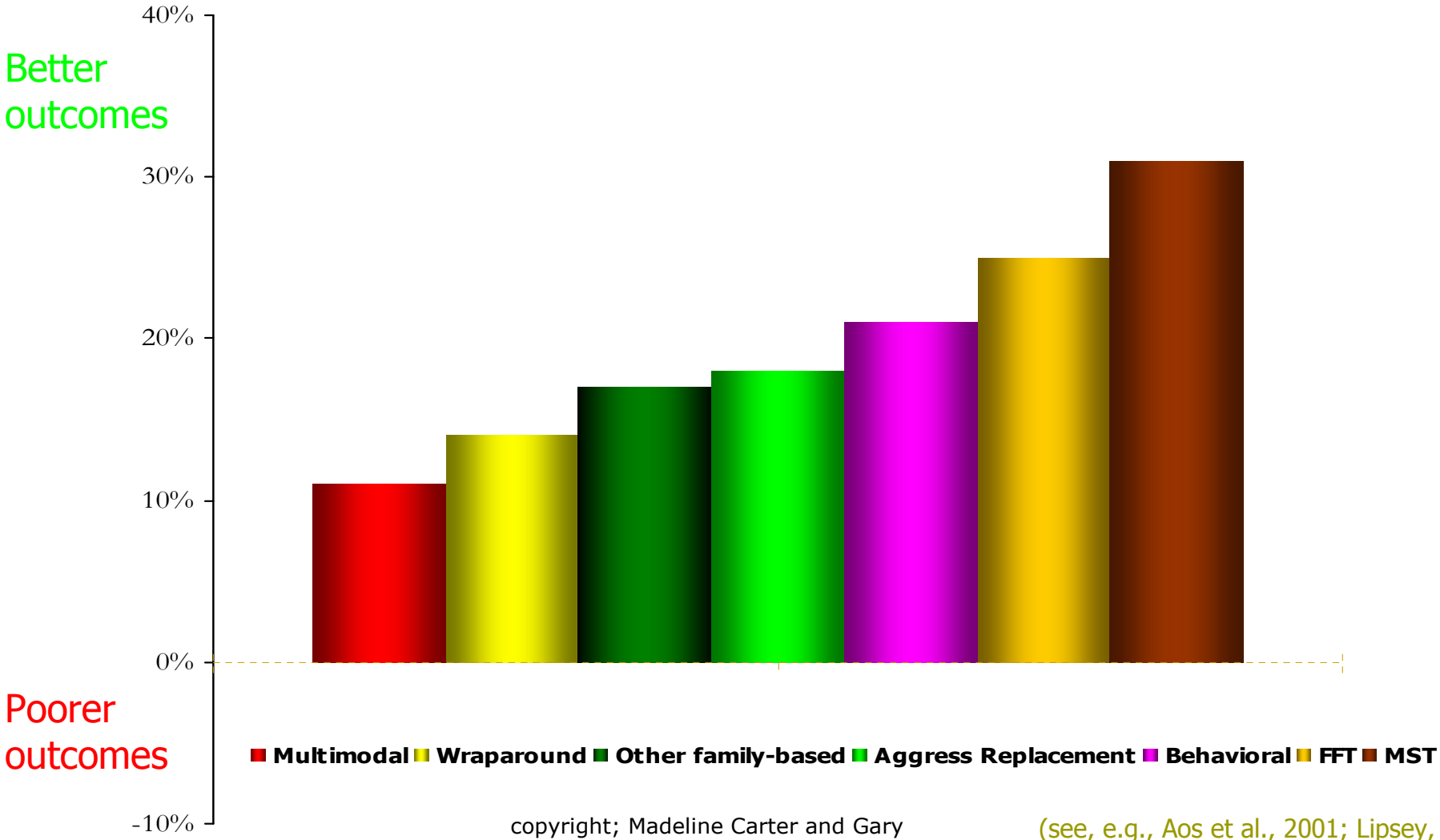
Intervention Effects for Juvenile Offenders



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(see, e.g., Aos et al., 2001; Lipsey, 1992, 1993; Lipsey & Wilson, 1998)

Implementing the Principles of Effective Correctional Intervention

(see, e.g., Andrews, 1994; Andrews & Bonta, 1998, 2003; Bogue et al., 2004; Clawson et al., 2005; Cullen & Gendreau, 2000; Gendreau, 1996)

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Risk Principle

- Assess offenders' risk and criminogenic needs
  - Via actuarial risk assessments
- Target higher risk offenders
  - More significant reductions in recidivism are likely to be realized
  - Targeting offenders who are already at low risk for recidivism is impractical
    - Data demonstrates that this can actually increase the likelihood of recidivism

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Risk Principle

- Ensure appropriate dosage
  - More intensive services for higher risk and higher need offenders
    - Duration of 3 to 9 months
    - Occupy 40-70% of offenders' time

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Need Principle

- Target dynamic risk factors (i.e., criminogenic needs)
  - Behavioral history
  - Attitudes, values, beliefs
  - Personality, temperament
  - Family
  - Peers
  - Vocational achievement

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Responsivity Principle

- Match interventions to responsivity factors
  - Learning style
  - Motivation
  - Mental health symptoms
  - Cognitive/intellectual functioning

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Responsivity Principle (cont.)

- Use multimodal, behavioral and cognitive-behavioral interventions that
  - Promote intrinsic motivation
    - Include more positive reinforcers than punishers
    - "Carrots versus sticks"

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How do the core principles measure up?

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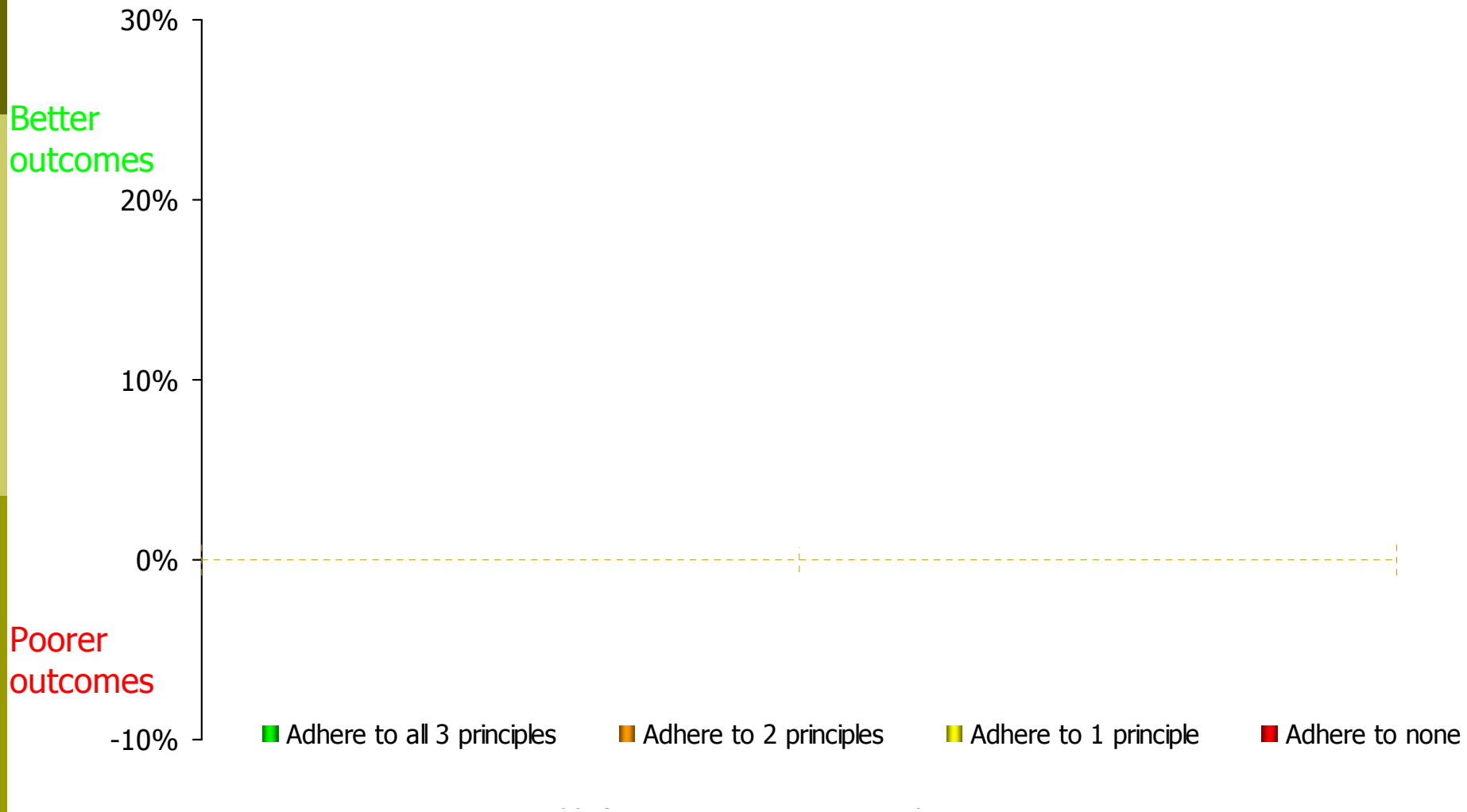
Impact of Adhering to the Core Principles of Effective Intervention: Risk, Needs, and Responsivity*



Kempker, CEPP, 2006

* meta-analysis of 230 studies (Andrews et al., 1999)

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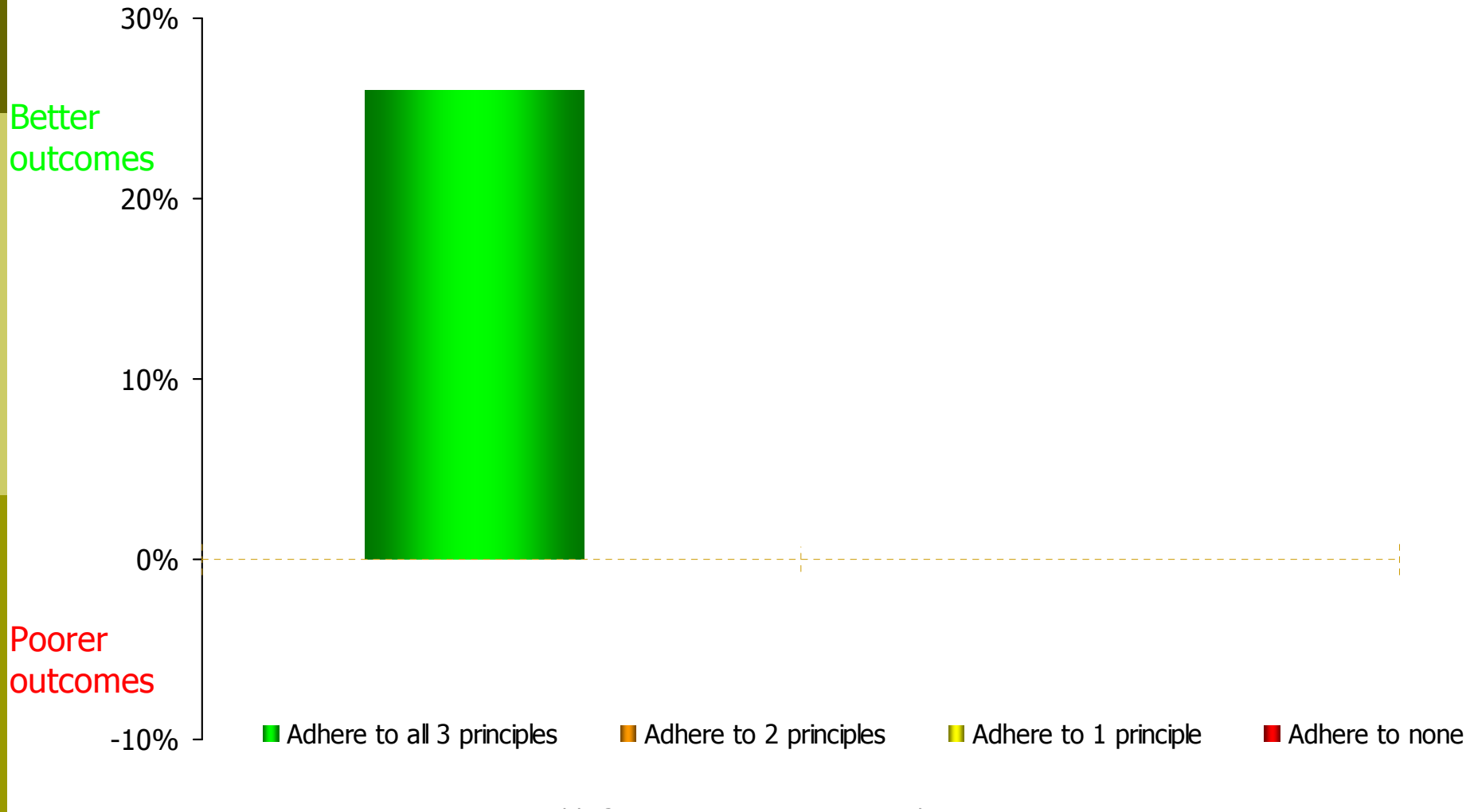

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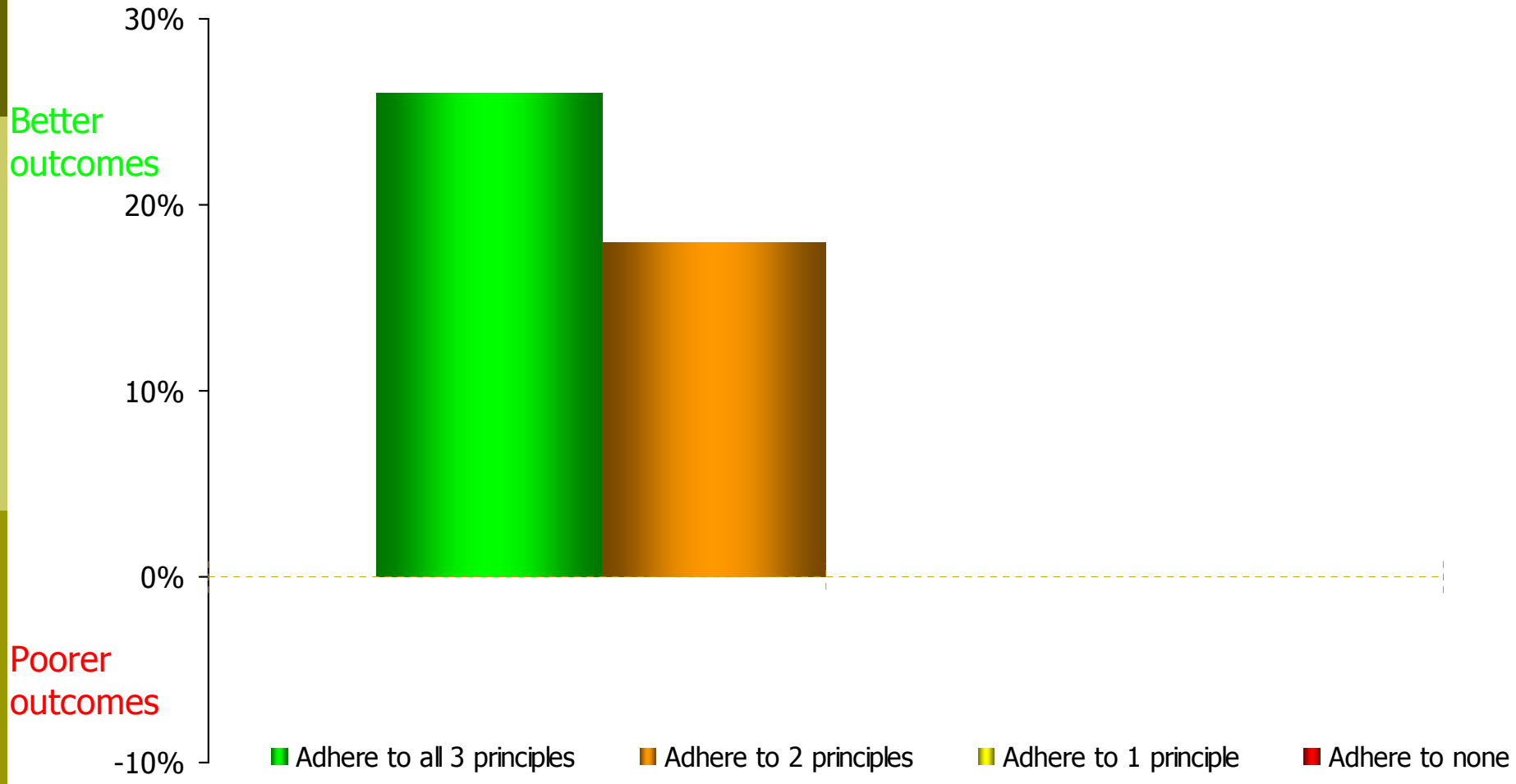

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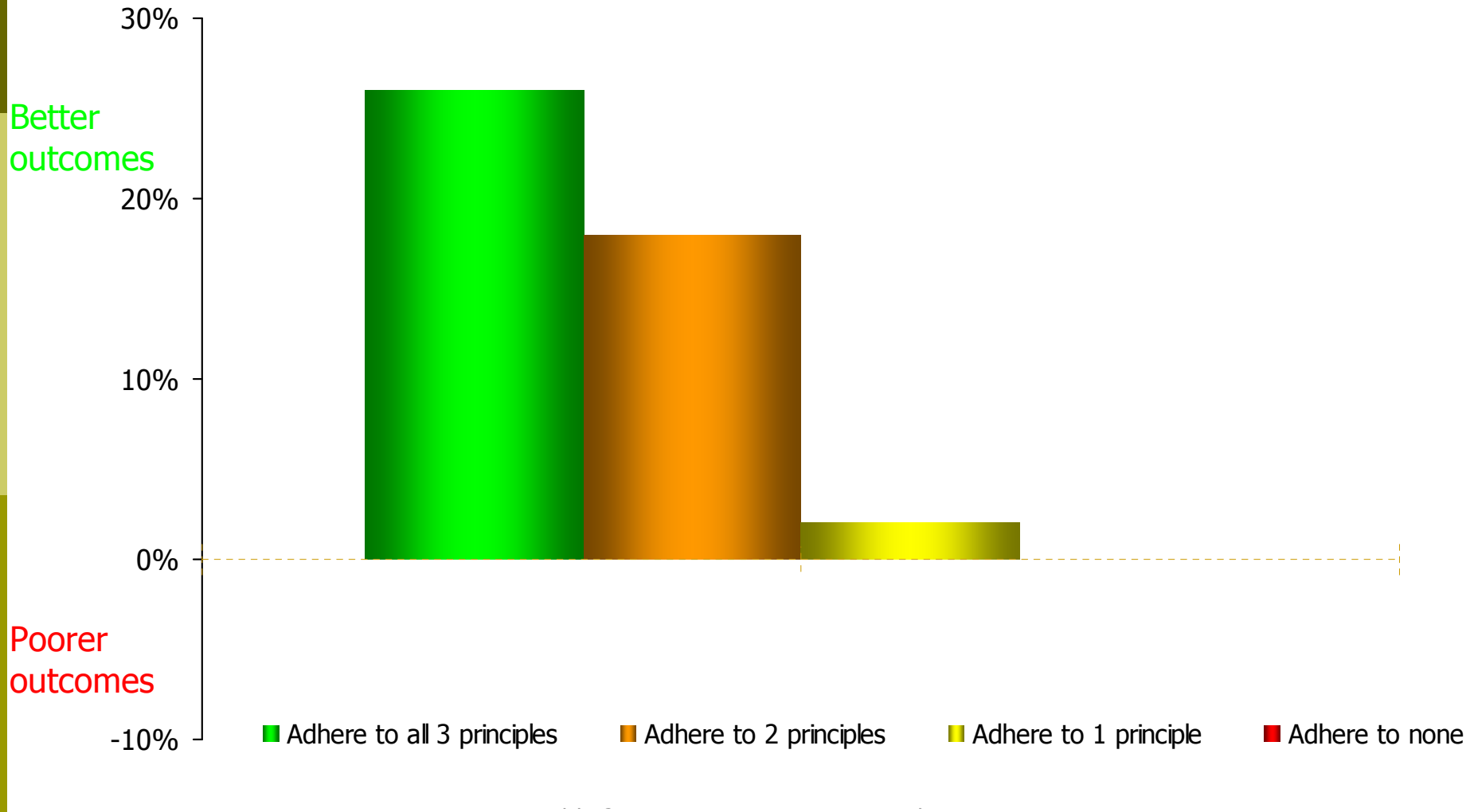

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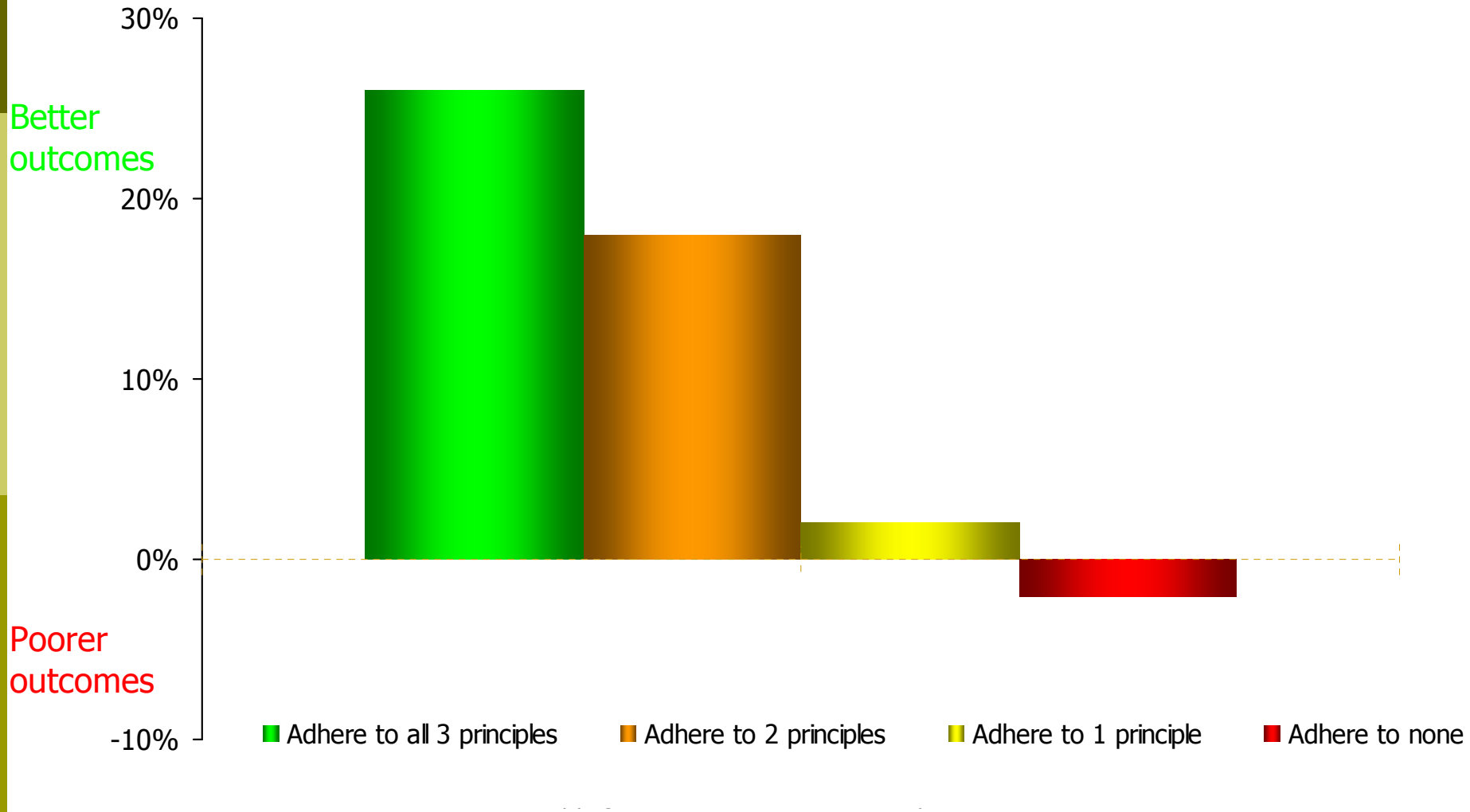

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Targeting Criminogenic and Non-Criminogenic Needs

Is More Better?

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Prison Misconduct Reductions as a Function of Targeting Multiple Criminogenic Needs*

* Meta-analyses including over 13,000 offenders

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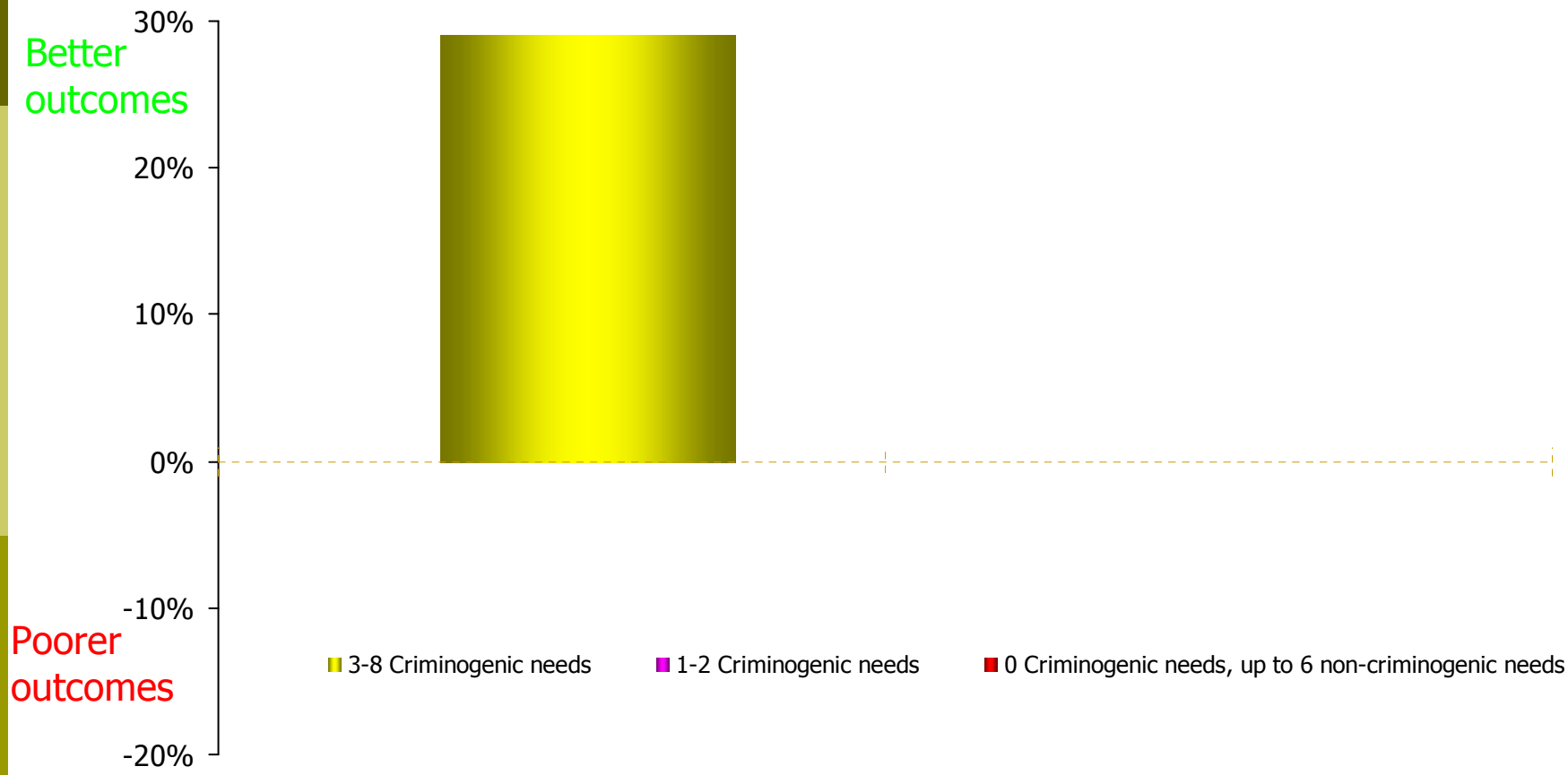
(French & Gendreau, 2003)

Prison Misconduct Reductions as a Function of Targeting Multiple Criminogenic Needs*



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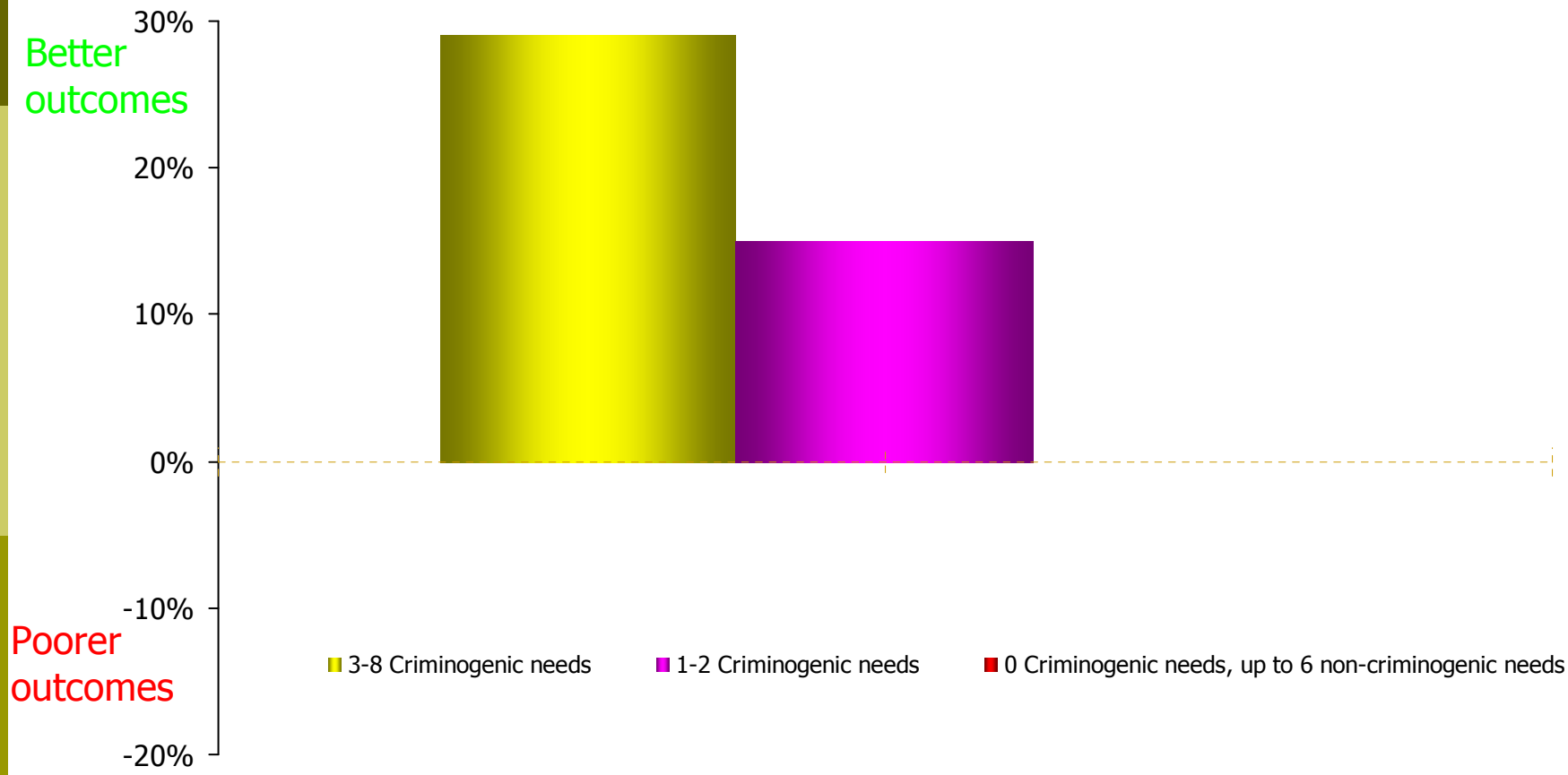

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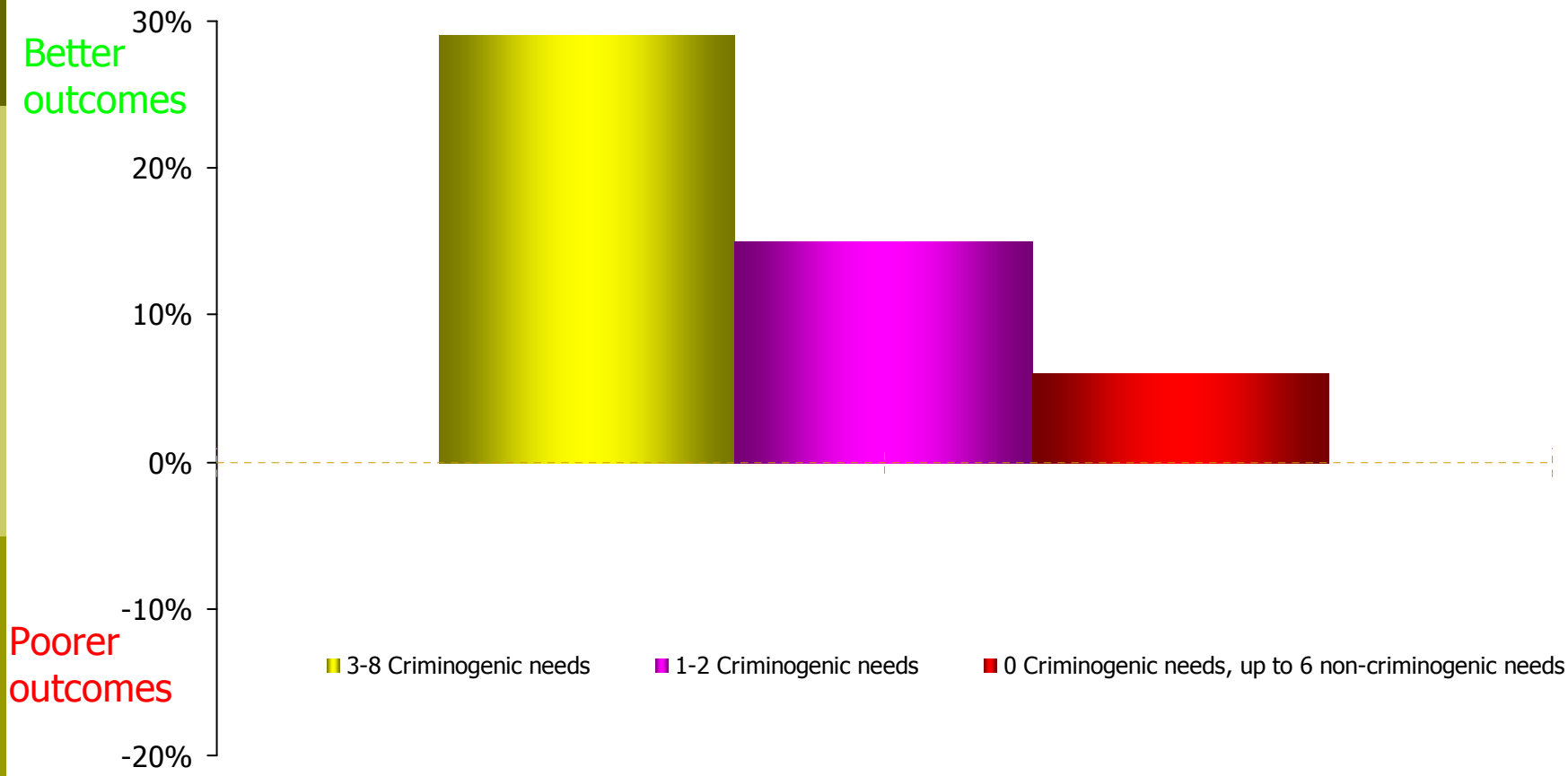

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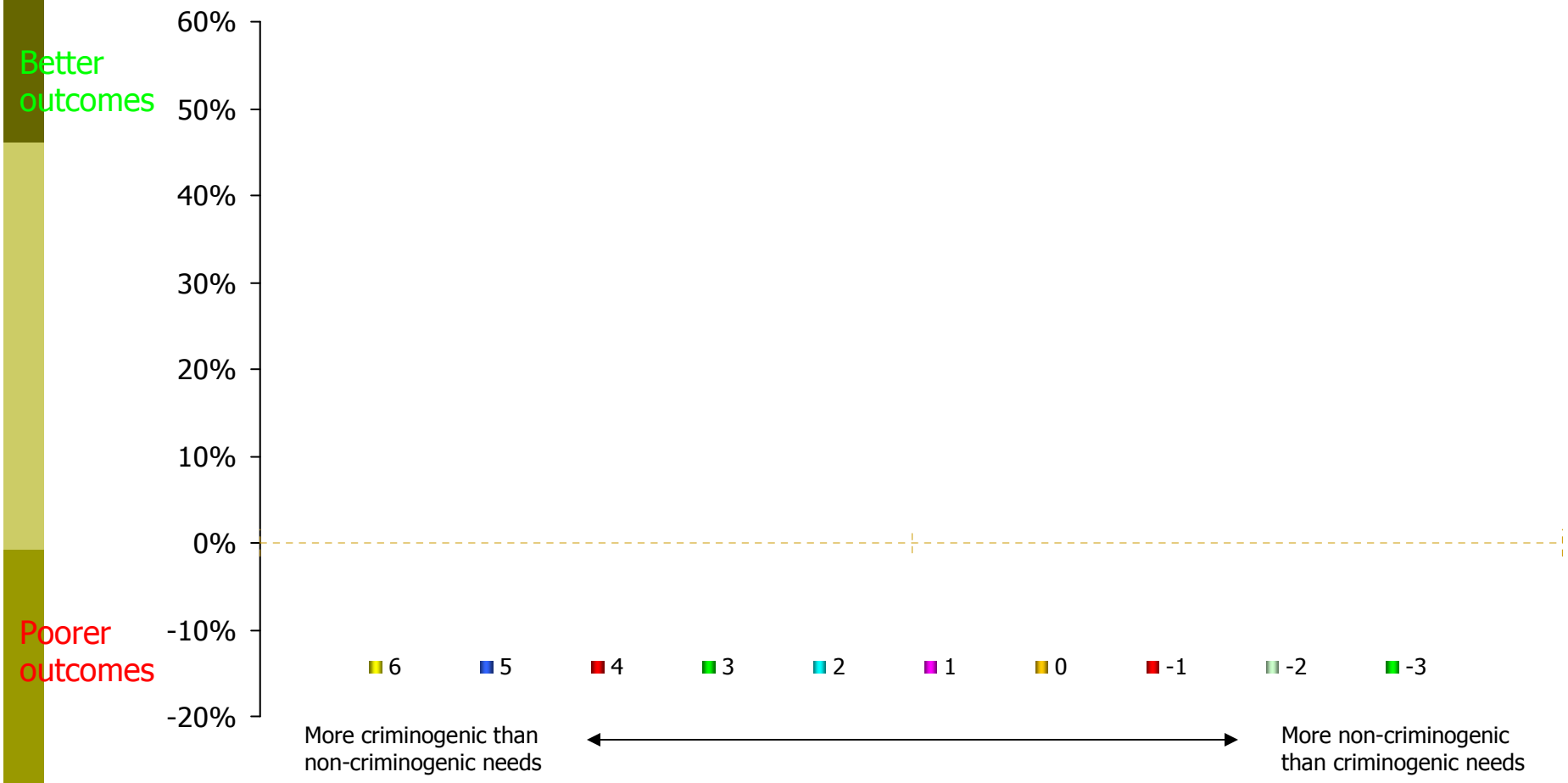

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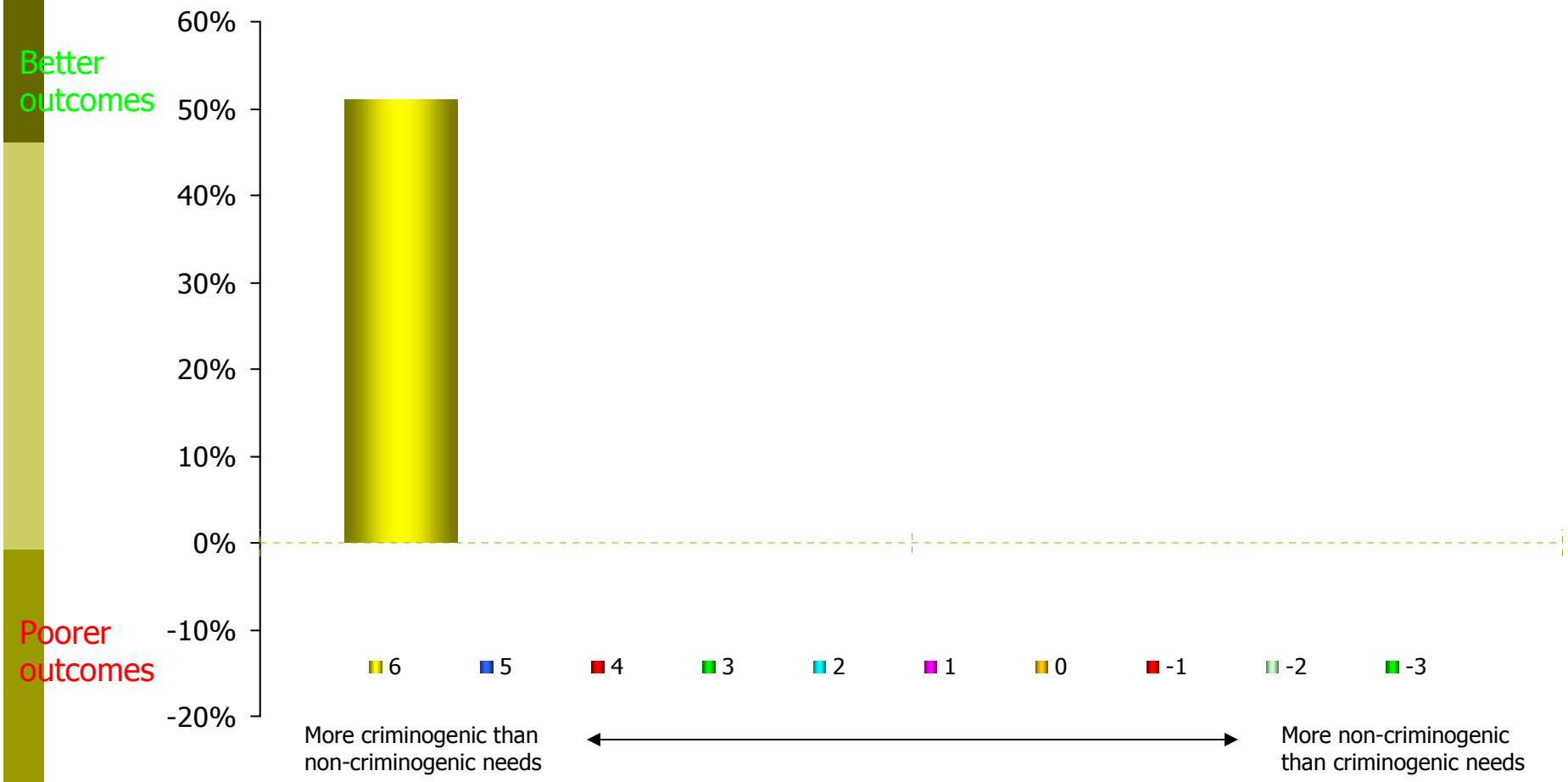

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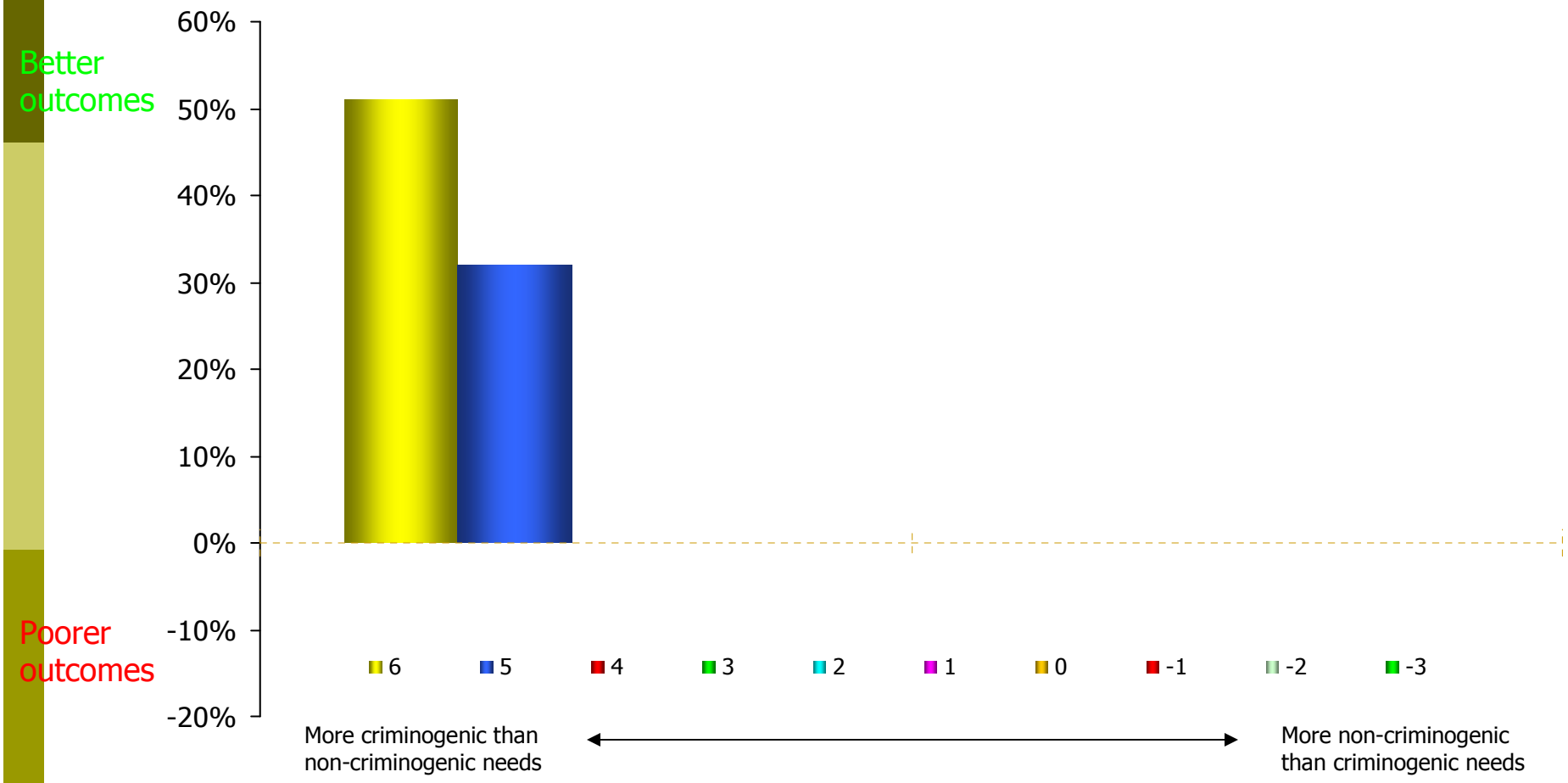

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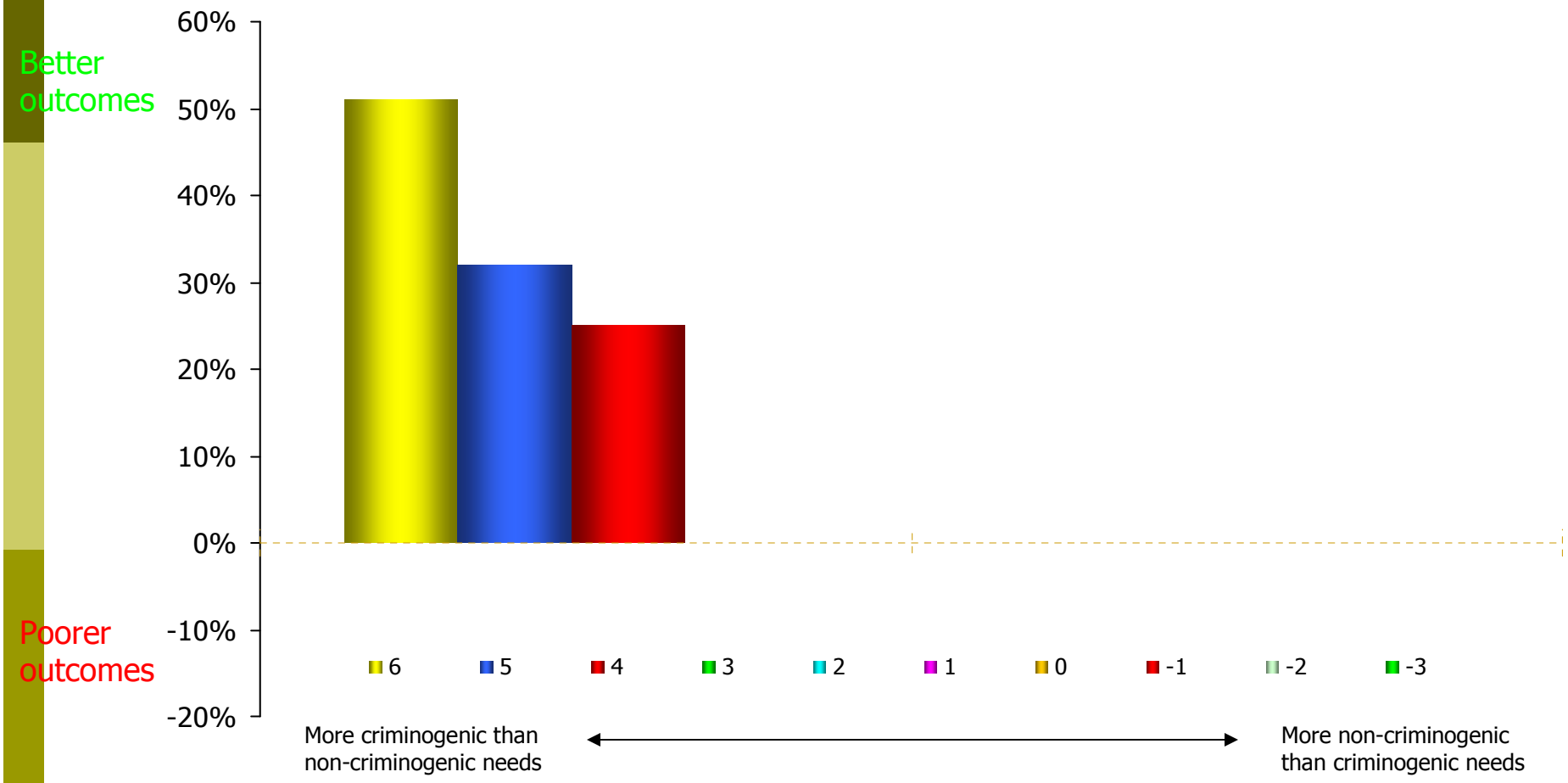

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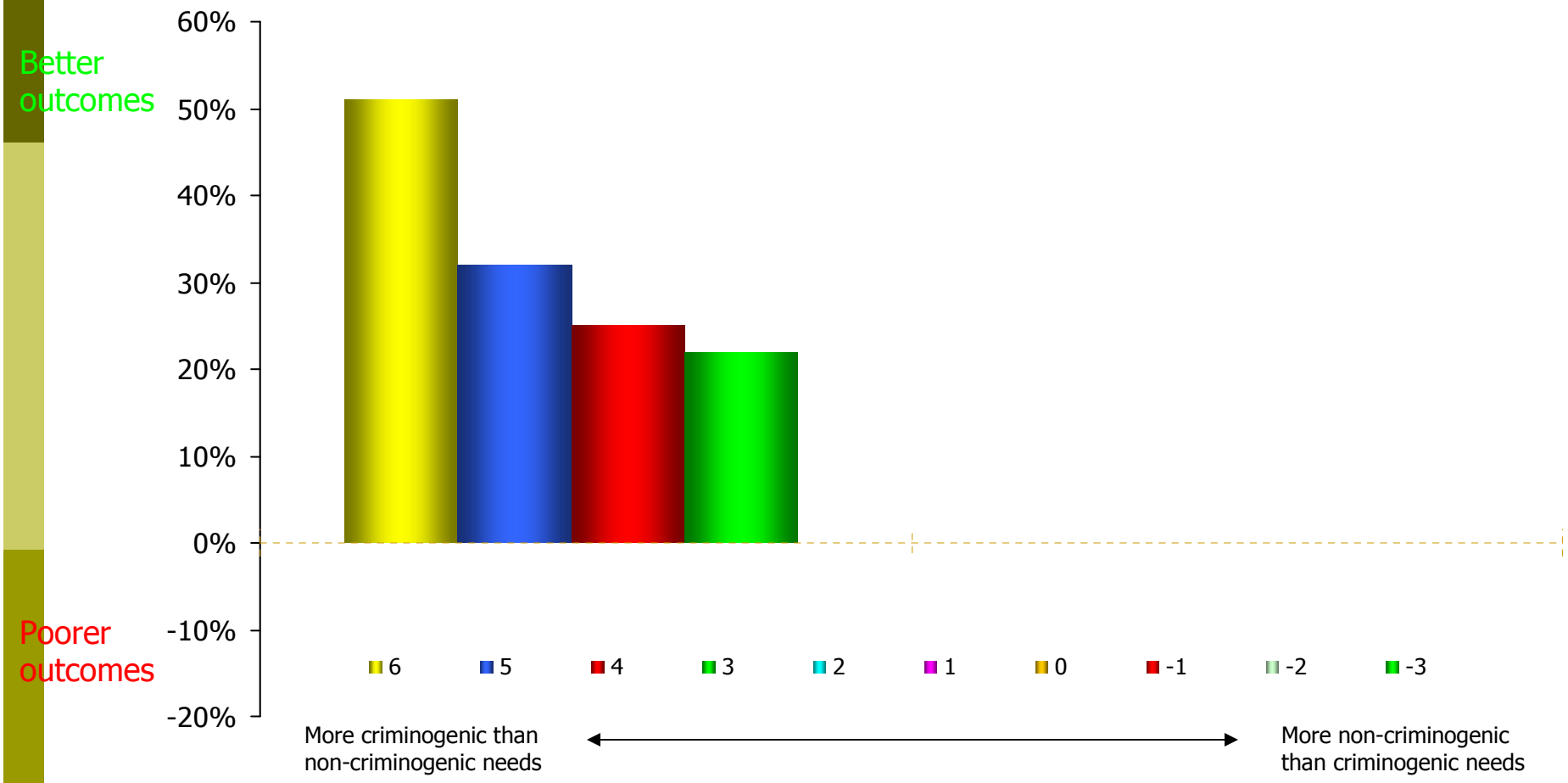

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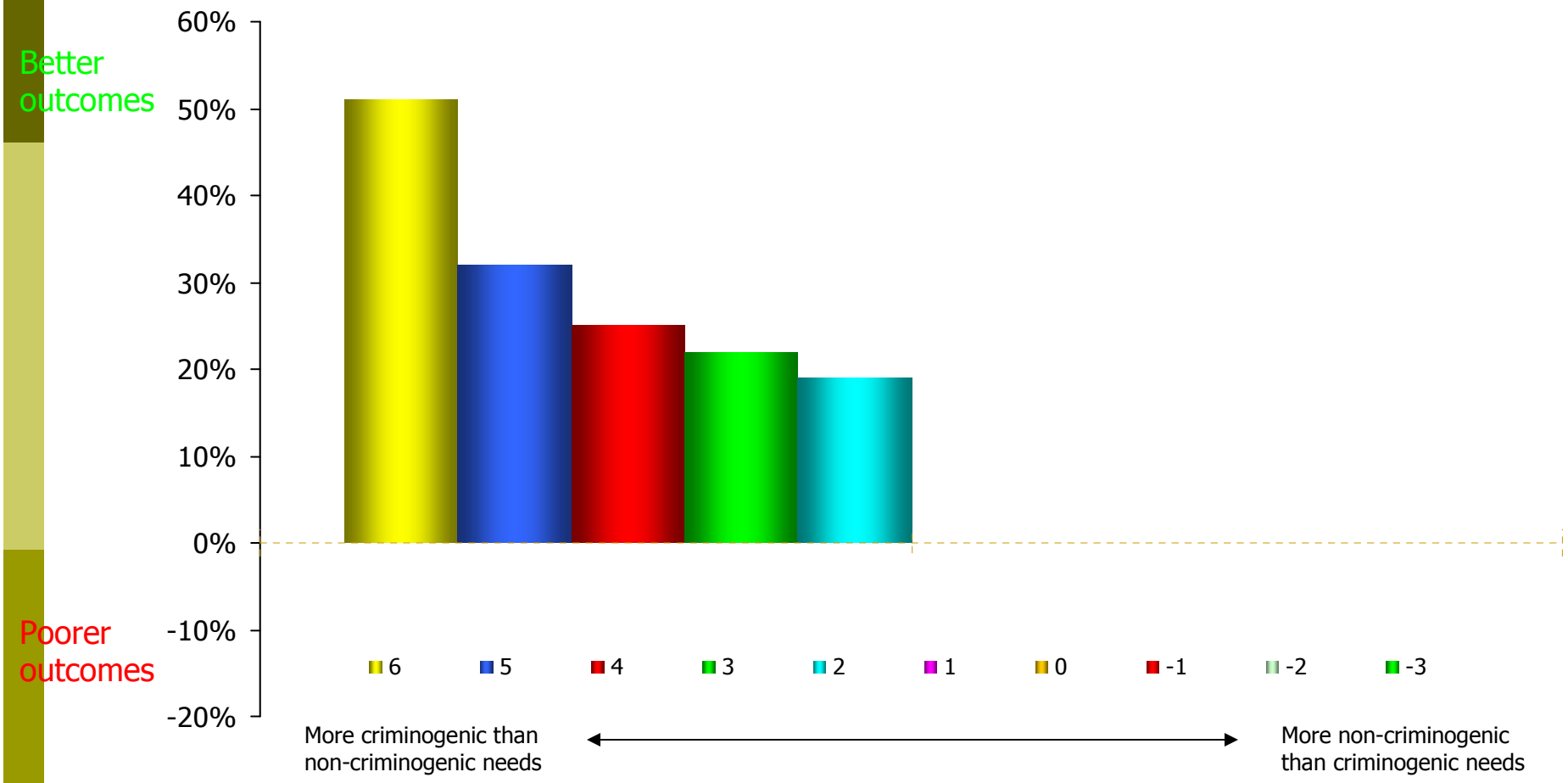

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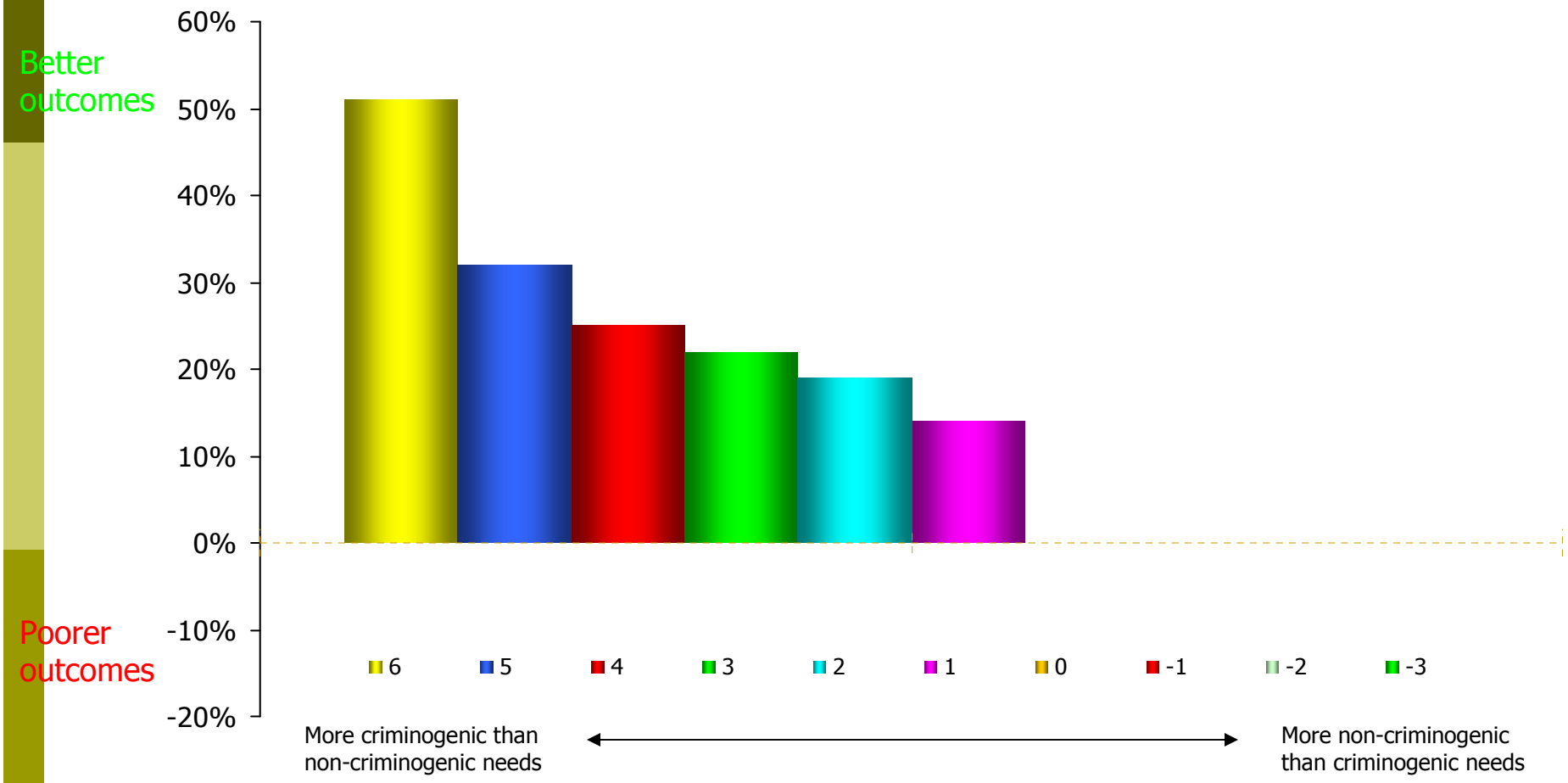

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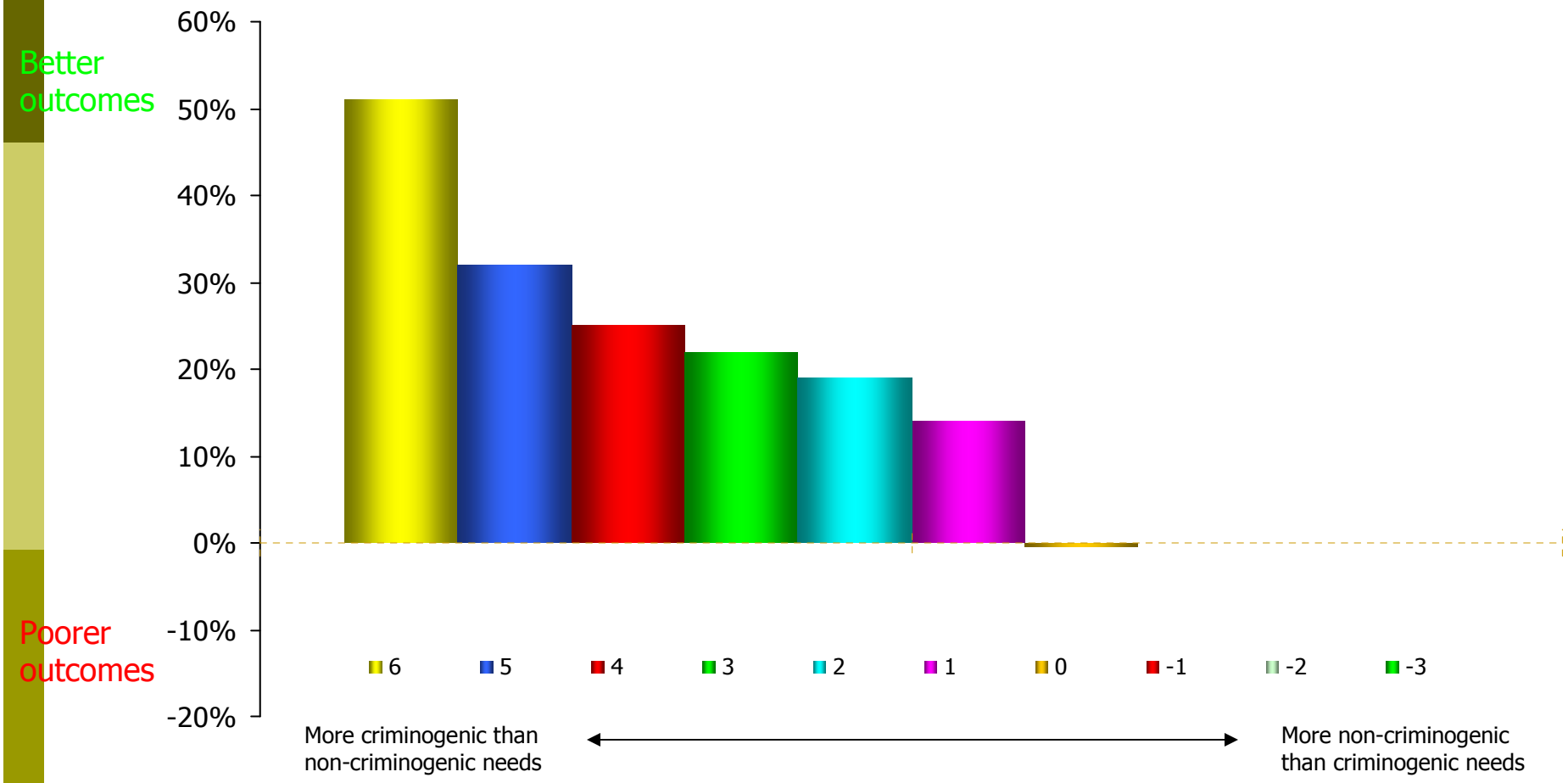

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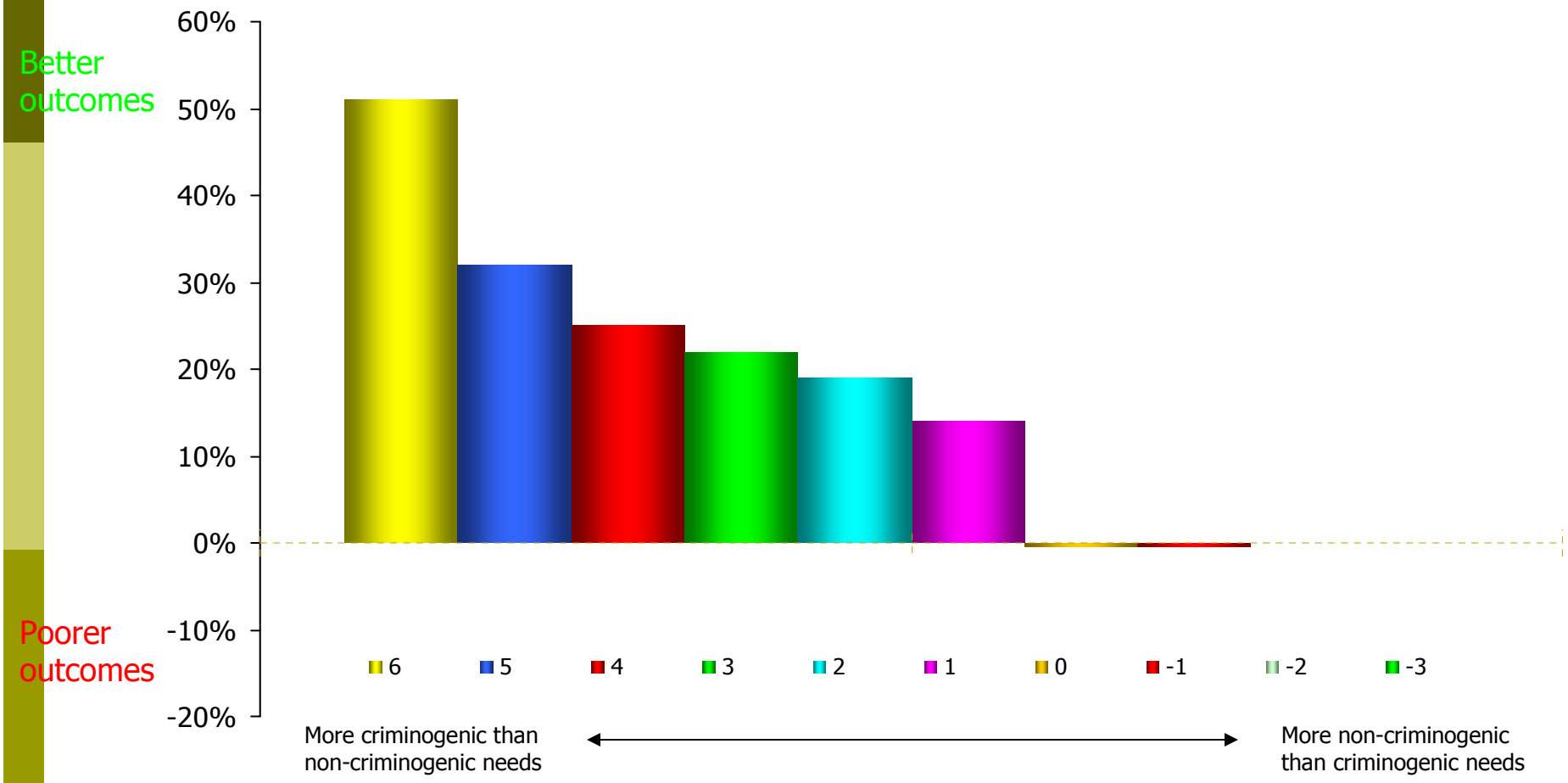

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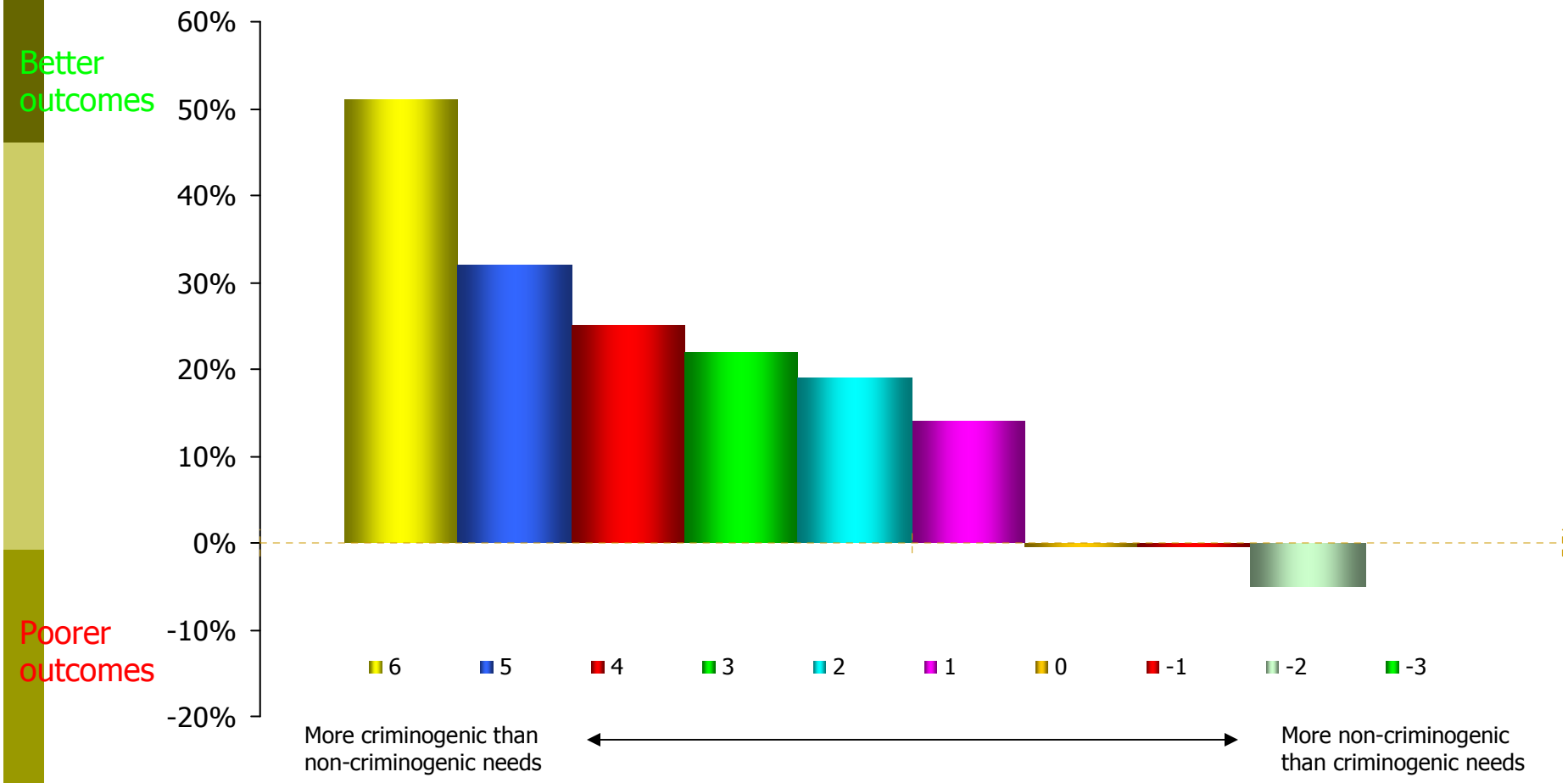

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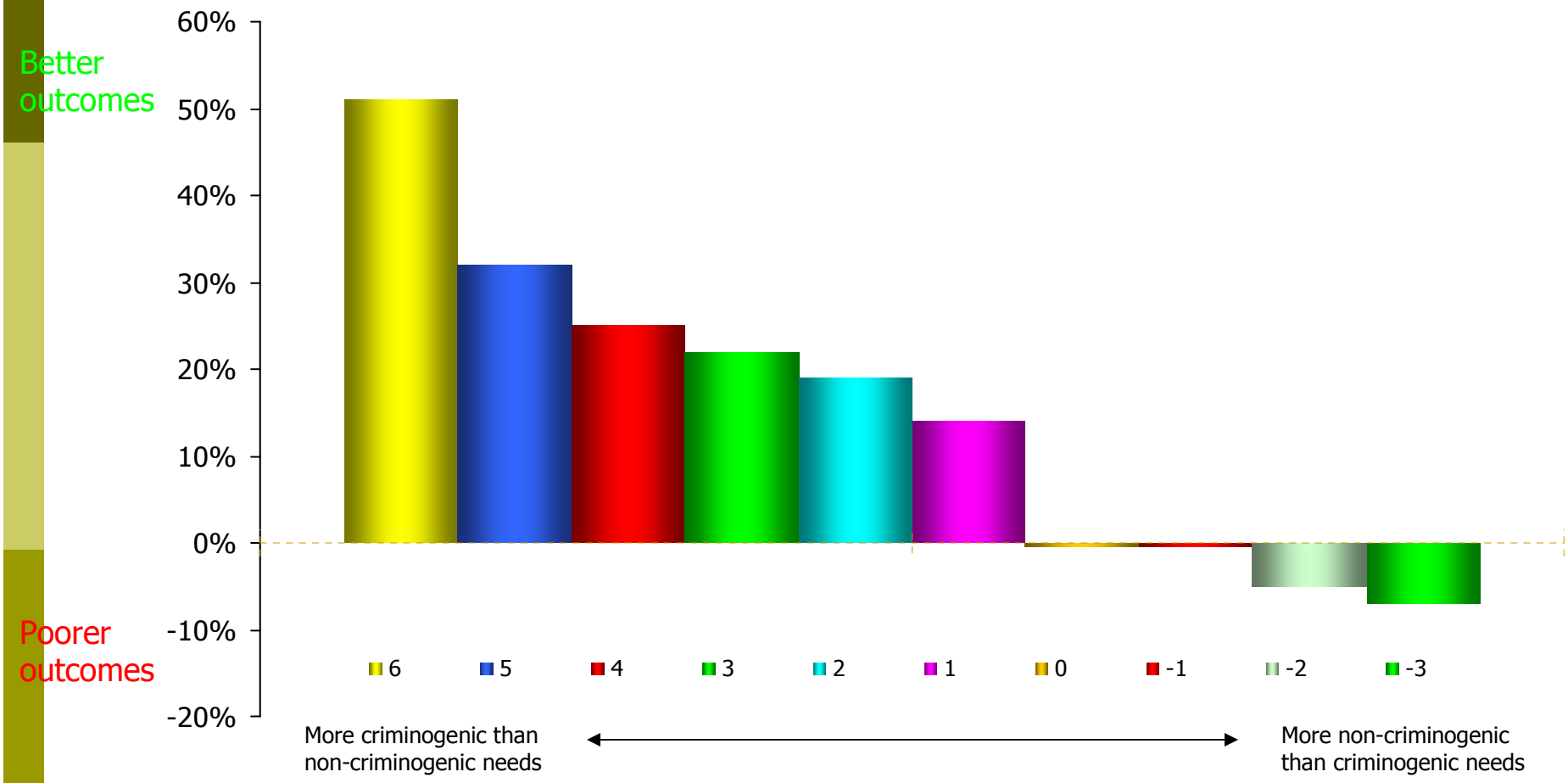

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Additional Principles

- Link institutional programs and services to community-based interventions
  - Continuity of care
- Engage prosocial community influences to support interventions
  - Foster positive ties in the community

(see, e.g., Andrews, 1994; Andrews & Bonta, 1998, 2003; Bogue et al., 2004; Clawson et al., 2005; Cullen & Gendreau, 2000; Gendreau, 1996)

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Additional Principles (cont.)

- Ensure program integrity
  - Solid program theory
  - Fidelity of implementation
  - Program climate
  - Well-trained staff

(see, e.g., Andrews, 1994; Andrews & Bonta, 1998, 2003; Bogue et al., 2004; Clawson et al., 2005; Cullen & Gendreau, 2000; Gendreau, 1996)

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Additional Principles (cont.)

- Monitor and evaluate
  - Staff performance (provide feedback and reinforcement)
  - Within-treatment changes
  - Outcome evaluations

(see, e.g., Andrews, 1994; Andrews & Bonta, 1998, 2003; Bogue et al., 2004; Clawson et al., 2005; Cullen & Gendreau, 2000; Gendreau, 1996)

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The Challenges of Implementing Evidence-Based Practices

- Requires a dedication to developing a complete understanding of current practice
- Requires a dedicated commitment to the realignment of activities by managers, line staff, and everyone in between
  - *Not just in corrections agencies, but in all service delivery agencies*

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